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Racketty-Packetty House

As told by Queen Crosspatch

By Frances Hodgson Burnett

Author of "Little Lord Fauntleroy," "Sara Crewe," "Editha's Burglar," etc., etc.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY HARRISON CADY

Now this is the story about the doll family I liked and the doll family I did n't. When you read it you are to remember something I am going to tell you. This is it: If you think dolls never do anything you don't see them do, you are very much mistaken. When people are not looking at them they can do anything they choose. They can dance and sing and play on the piano and have all sorts of fun. But they can only move about and talk when people turn their backs and are not looking. If any one looks, they just stop. Fairies know this and of course Fairies visit in all the dolls' houses where the dolls are agreeable. They will not associate, though, with dolls who are not nice. They never call or leave their cards at a dolls' house where the dolls are proud or bad tempered. They are very particular. If you are conceited or ill-tempered yourself, you will never know a fairy as long as you live.

QUEEN CROSSPATCH.

RACKETTY-PACKETTY HOUSE was in a corner of Cynthia's nursery. And it was not in the best corner either. It was in the corner behind the door, and that was not at all a fashionable neighborhood. Racketty-Packetty House had been pushed there to be out of the way when Tidy Castle was brought in, on Cynthia's birthday. As soon as she saw Tidy Castle Cynthia did not care for Racketty-Packetty House and indeed was quite ashamed of it. She thought the corner behind the door quite good enough for such a shabby old dolls' house, when there was the beautiful big new one built like a castle and furnished with the most elegant chairs and tables and carpets and curtains and ornaments and pictures and beds and baths and lamps and book-cases, and with a knocker on

the front door, and a stable with a pony cart in it at the back. The minute she saw it she called out:

"Oh! what a beautiful doll castle! What shall we do with that untidy old Racketty-Packetty House now? It is too shabby and old-fashioned to stand near it."

In fact, that was the way in which the old dolls' house got its name. It had always been called, "The Dolls' House," before, but after that it was pushed into the unfashionable neighborhood behind the door and ever afterwards—when it was spoken of at all—it was just called Racketty-Packetty House, and nothing else.

Of course Tidy Castle was grand, and Tidy Castle was new and had all the modern improvements in it, and Racketty-Packetty

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House was as old-fashioned as it could be. It had belonged to Cynthia's Grandmamma and had been made in the days when Queen Victoria was a little girl, and when there were no electric lights even in Princesses' dolls' houses. Cynthia's Grandmamma had kept it very neat because she had been a good housekeeper even when she was seven years old. But Cynthia was not a good housekeeper and she did not re-cover the furniture

when their house arrived as Cynthia made when she saw Tidy Castle.

Cynthia's Grandmamma had danced about and clapped her hands with delight, and she had scrambled down upon her knees and taken the dolls out one by one and thought their clothes beautiful. And she had given each one of them a grand name.

"This one shall be Amelia," she said. "And this one is Charlotte, and this is Victoria Leopoldina, and this one Aurelia Matilda, and this one Leontine, and this one Clotilda, and these boys shall be Augustus and Rowland and Vincent and Charles Edward Stuart."

For a long time they led a very gay and fashionable life. They had parties and balls and were presented at Court and went to Royal Christenings and Weddings and were married themselves and had families and scarlet fever and whooping cough and funerals and every luxury. But that was long, long ago, and now all was changed. Their house had grown shabbier and shabbier, and their clothes had grown simply awful; and Aurelia Matilda and Victoria Leopoldina had been broken to bits and thrown into the dust-bin, and Leontine—who had really been the beauty of the family—had been dragged out on the hearth rug one night and had had nearly all her paint licked off and a leg chewed up by a Newfoundland puppy, so that she was a sight to behold. As for the boys, Rowland and Vincent had quite disappeared, and Charlotte and Amelia always believed they had run away to seek their fortunes, because things were in such a state at home. So the only ones who were left were Clotilda and Amelia and Charlotte and poor Leontine and Augustus and Charles Edward Stuart. Even they had their names changed.

After Leontine had had her paint licked off so that her head had white bald spots on it and she had scarcely any features, a boy cousin of Cynthia's had put a bright red spot on each cheek and painted her a turned-up nose and round saucer blue eyes and a comical mouth. He and Cynthia had called her "Ridiklis" instead of Leontine, and she had been called that ever since. All the dolls were jointed Dutch dolls, so it was easy to paint any kind of features on them and stick out their arms and legs in any way you liked, and Leontine did look funny after Cynthia's cousin had finished. She certainly was not a beauty but her turned-up nose and her round eyes and funny mouth always seemed to be



MARKET-DAY AT RACKETTY-PACKETTY HOUSE.

when it got dingy, or re-paper the walls, or mend the carpets and bedclothes, and she never thought of such a thing as making new clothes for the doll family, so that of course their early Victorian frocks and capes and bonnets grew in time to be too shabby for words. You see, when Queen Victoria was a little girl, dolls wore queer frocks and long pantalets and boy dolls wore funny frilled trousers and coats which it would almost make you laugh to look at.

But the Racketty-Packetty House family had known better days. I and my Fairies had known them when they were quite new and had been a birthday present just as Tidy Castle was when Cynthia turned eight years old, and there was as much fuss about them

laughing so she really was the most good-natured-looking creature you ever saw.

Charlotte and Amelia, Cynthia had called Meg and Peg, and Clotilda she called Kilmanskeg, and Augustus she called Gustibus, and Charles Edward Stuart was nothing but Peter Piper. So that was the end of their grand names.

The truth was, they went through all sorts of things, and if they had not been such a jolly lot of dolls they might have had fits and appendicitis and died of grief. But not a bit of it. If you will believe it, they got fun out of everything. They used to just scream with laughter over the new names, and they laughed so much over them that they got quite fond of them. When Meg's pink silk flounces were torn she pinned them up and did n't mind in the least, and when Peg's lace mantilla was played with by a kitten and brought back to her in rags and tags, she just put a few stitches in it and put it on again; and when Peter Piper lost almost the whole leg of one of his trousers he just laughed and said it made it easier for him to kick about and turn somersaults and he wished the other leg would tear off too.

You never saw a family have such fun. They could make up stories and pretend things and invent games out of nothing. And my Fairies were so fond of them that I could n't keep them away from the dolls' house. They would go and have fun with Meg and Peg and Kilmanskeg and Gustibus and Peter Piper, even when I had work for them to do in Fairyland. But there, I was so fond of that shabby, disreputable family myself that I never would scold much about them, and I often went to see them. That is how I know so much about them. They were so fond of each other and so good-natured and always in such spirits that everybody who knew them was fond of them. And it was really only Cynthia who did n't know them and thought them only a lot of old disreputable-looking Dutch dolls—and Dutch dolls were quite out of fashion. The truth was that Cynthia was not a particularly nice little girl, and did not care much for anything unless it was quite new. But the kitten who had torn the lace mantilla got to know the family and simply loved them all, and the Newfoundland puppy was so sorry about Leontine's paint and her left leg, that he could never do enough to make up. He wanted to marry Leontine as soon as he grew old enough to wear a collar, but Leontine said she would never desert her

family; because now that she was n't the beauty any more she became the useful one, and did all the kitchen work, and sat up and made poultices and beef tea when any of the rest were ill. And the Newfoundland puppy saw she was right, for the whole family simply adored Ridiklis and could not possibly have done without her. Meg and Peg and Kilmanskeg could have married any minute if they had liked. There were two cock sparrows and a gentleman mouse, who proposed to them over and over again. They all three said they did not want fashionable wives but cheerful dispositions and a happy home. But Meg and Peg were like Ridiklis and could not bear to leave their families—besides not wanting to live in nests, and hatch eggs—and Kilmanskeg said she would die of a broken heart if she could not be with Ridiklis, and Ridiklis did not like cheese and crumbs and mousy things, so they could never live together in a mouse hole. But neither the gentleman mouse nor the sparrows were offended because the news was broken to them so sweetly and



LEONTINE (WHO WAS AFTERWARD CALLED
"RIDIKLIS").

they went on visiting just as before. Everything was as shabby and disreputable and as gay and happy as it could be until Tidy

Castle was brought into the nursery and then the whole family had rather a fright.

It happened in this way:

When the dolls' house was lifted by the nurse and carried into the corner behind the door, of course it was rather an exciting and shaky thing for Meg and Peg and Kilmanskeg and Gustibus and Peter Piper (Ridiklis was out shopping). The furniture tumbled about and everybody had to hold on to anything they could catch hold of. As it was, Kilmanskeg slid under a table and Peter Piper sat down in the coal-box; but notwithstanding all this, they did not lose their tempers and when the nurse sat their house down on the floor with a bump, they all got up and began to laugh. Then they ran and peeped out of the windows and then they ran back and laughed again.

"Well," said Peter Piper, "we have been called Meg and Peg and Kilmanskeg and Gustibus and Peter Piper instead of our grand names, and now we live in a place called Racketty-Packetty House. Who cares! Let's join hands and have a dance."

And they joined hands and danced round

It was just at this minute that Ridiklis came back. The nurse had found her under



"THEY DID NOT WANT FASHIONABLE WIVES, BUT CHEERFUL DISPOSITIONS AND HAPPY HOMES."



"SHE DID ALL THE KITCHEN WORK."

and round and kicked up their heels, and their rags and tatters flew about and they laughed until they fell down, one on top of the other.

a chair and stuck her in through a window. She sat on the drawing-room sofa which had holes in its covering and the stuffing coming out, and her one whole leg stuck out straight in front of her, and her bonnet and shawl were on one side and her basket was on her left arm full of things she had got cheap at market. She was out of breath and rather pale through being lifted up and swished through the air so suddenly, but her saucer eyes and her funny mouth looked as cheerful as ever.

"Good gracious, if you knew what I have just heard!" she said. They all scrambled up and called out together.

"Hello! What is it?"

"The nurse said the most awful thing," she answered them. "When Cynthia asked what she should do with this old Racketty-Packetty House, she said, 'Oh! I'll put it behind the door for the present and then it shall be carried down-stairs and burned. It's too disgraceful to be kept in any decent nursery.'"

"Oh!" cried out Peter Piper.

"Oh!" said Gustibus.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" said Meg and Peg and Kilmanskeg. "Will they burn our dear old shabby house? Do you think they will?" And actually tears began to run down their cheeks.

Peter Piper sat down on the floor all at once with his hands stuffed in his pockets.

Gustibus leaned against the wall with his hands stuffed in his pockets.

"I would n't move if I was made King of England," he said. "Buckingham Palace would n't be half as nice."

"We 've had such fun here," said Peg. And Kilmanskeg shook her head from side to side and wiped her eyes on her ragged pocket-handkerchief. There is no knowing what would have happened to them if Peter Piper had n't cheered up as he always did.

"I say," he said, "do you hear that noise?" They all listened and heard a rumbling. Peter Piper ran to the window and looked out and then ran back grinning.

"It 's the nurse rolling up the arm-chair before the house to hide it, so that it won't disgrace the castle. Hooray! Hooray! If they don't see us they will forget all about us and we shall not be burned up at all. Our nice old Rackety-Packetty House will be left alone and we can enjoy ourselves more than ever—because we sha'n't be bothered with Cynthia—Hello! let 's all join hands and have a dance."

So they all joined hands and danced round in a ring again and they were all so relieved that they laughed and laughed until they all tumbled down in a heap just as they had done before, and rolled about giggling and squealing. It certainly seemed as if they were quite safe for some time at least. The big easy chair hid them and both the nurse and Cynthia seemed to forget that there was such a



"TWO COCK SPARROWS AND A GENTLEMAN MOUSE PROPOSED TO THEM."

"I don't care how shabby it is," he said. "It 's a jolly nice old place and it 's the only house we 've ever had."

"I never want to have any other," said Meg. "They sha'n't burn our dear old house."

about giggling and squealing. It certainly seemed as if they were quite safe for some time at least. The big easy chair hid them and both the nurse and Cynthia seemed to forget that there was such a

thing as a Racketty-Packetty House in the neighborhood. Cynthia was so delighted with Tidy Castle that she played with nothing else for days and days. And instead of being jealous of their grand neighbors the Racketty-Packetty House people began to get all sorts of fun out of watching them from their own windows. Several of their windows were broken and some had rags and paper stuffed into the broken panes, but Meg and Peg and Peter Piper would go and peep out of one, and Gustibus and Kilmanskeg would peep out of another, and Ridiklis could scarcely get her dishes washed and her potatoes pared because she could see the castle kitchen from her scullery window. It was *so* exciting!

The Castle dolls were grand beyond words, and they were all lords and ladies. These were their names. There was Lady Gwendolen Vere de Vere. She was haughty and had dark eyes and hair and carried her head thrown back and her nose in the air. There was Lady Muriel Vere de Vere, and she was cold and lovely and indifferent and looked down the bridge of her delicate nose. And there was Lady Doris, who had fluffy golden hair and laughed mockingly at everybody. And there was Lord Hubert and Lord Rupert and Lord Francis, who were all handsome enough to make you feel as if you could faint. And there was their mother, the Duchess of Tidysshire; and of course there were all sorts of maids and footmen and cooks and scullery maids and even gardeners.

"We never thought of living to see such grand society," said Peter Piper to his brother and sisters. "It's quite a kind of blessing."

"It's almost like being grand ourselves, just to be able to watch them," said Meg and Peg and Kilmanskeg, squeezing together and flattening their noses against the attic windows.

They could see bits of the sumptuous white and gold drawing-room with the Duchess sitting reading near the fire, her golden glasses upon her nose, and Lady Gwendolen playing haughtily upon the harp, and Lady Muriel coldly listening to her. Lady Doris was having her golden hair dressed by her maid in her bed-room and Lord Hubert was reading the newspaper with a high-bred air, while Lord Francis was writing letters to noblemen of his acquaintance, and Lord Rupert was—in an aristocratic manner—glancing over his love letters from ladies of title.

Kilmanskeg and Peter Piper just pinched each other with glee and squealed with delight.

"Is n't it fun," said Peter Piper. "I say; are n't they awful swells! But Lord Francis can't kick about in his trousers as I can in mine, and neither can the others. I'd like to see them try to do this,"—and he turned three summersaults in the middle of the room and stood on his head on the biggest hole in the carpet—and wiggled his legs and twiggled his toes at them until they shouted so with laughing that Ridiklis ran in with a saucepan in her hand and perspiration on her forehead, because she was cooking turnips, which was all they had for dinner.

"You must n't laugh so loud," she cried out. "If we make so much noise the Tidy Castle people will begin to complain of this being a low neighborhood and they might insist on moving away."

"Oh! scrump!" said Peter Piper, who sometimes invented doll slang—though there



"LORD RUPERT WAS GLANCING OVER HIS LOVE LETTERS."

was n't really a bit of harm in him. "I would n't have them move away for anything. They are meat and drink to me."

"They are going to have a dinner of ten courses," sighed Ridiklis, "I can see them

cooking it from my scullery window. And I have nothing but turnips to give you."

"Who cares!" said Peter Piper, "Let 's have ten courses of turnips and pretend each course is exactly like the one they are having at the Castle."

"I like turnips almost better than anything—almost—perhaps not quite," said Gustibus.

"I can eat ten courses of turnips like a shot."

"Let 's go and find out what their courses are," said Meg and Peg and Kilmanskeg, "and then we will write a menu on a piece of pink tissue paper."

And if you 'll believe it, that was what they did. They divided their turnips into ten courses and they called the first one "Hors d'œuvres," and the last one "Ices," with a French name, and Peter Piper kept jumping up from the table and pretending he was a footman and flourishing about in his flapping rags of trousers and announcing the names of the dishes in such a grand way that they laughed till they nearly died, and said they never had had such a splendid dinner in their lives, and that they would rather live behind the door and watch the Tidy Castle people than be the Tidy Castle people themselves.

And then of course they all joined hands and danced round and round and kicked up their heels for joy, because they always did that whenever there was the least excuse for it—and quite often when there was n't any at all, just because it was such good exercise and worked off their high spirits so that they could settle down for a while.

This was the way things went on day after day. They almost lived at their windows. They watched the Tidy Castle family get up and be dressed by their maids and valets in different clothes almost every day. They saw them drive out in their carriages, and have parties, and go to balls. They all nearly had brain fever with delight the day they watched Lady Gwendolen and Lady Muriel and Lady Doris, dressed in their Court trains and feathers, going to be presented at the first Drawing-Room.

After the lovely creatures had gone the whole family sat down in a circle round the Racketty-Packetty House library fire, and Ridiklis read aloud to them about Drawing-Rooms, out of a scrap of the Lady's Pictorial she had found, and after that they had a Court Drawing-Room of their own, and they made tissue paper trains and glass bead crowns for diamond tiaras, and sometimes Gustibus pretended to be the Royal family,

and the others were presented to him and kissed his hand, and then the others took turns and he was presented. And suddenly the most delightful thing occurred to Peter



"PETER PIPER KEPT JUMPING UP FROM THE TABLE PRETENDING HE WAS A FOOTMAN."

Piper. He thought it would be rather nice to make them all into lords and ladies and he did it by touching them on the shoulder with the drawing-room poker which he straightened because it was so crooked that it was almost bent double. It is not exactly the way such things are done at Court, but Peter Piper thought it would do—and at any rate it was great fun. So he made them all kneel down in a row and he touched each on the shoulder with the poker and said:

"Rise up, Lady Meg and Lady Peg and Lady Kilmanskeg and Lady Ridiklis of Racketty-Packetty House—and also the Right Honorable Lord Gustibus Rags!" And they all jumped up at once and made bows and curtsied to each other. But they made Peter Piper into a Duke, and he was called the Duke of Tags. He knelt down on the big hole in the carpet and each one of them gave him a little thump on the shoulder with the poker, because it took more thumps to make a Duke than a common or garden Lord.

The day after this another much more ex-

citing thing took place. The nurse was in a bad temper and when she was tidying the nursery she pushed the easy chair aside and saw Racketty-Packetty House.

"Oh!" she said, "there is that Racketty-Packetty old thing still. I had forgotten it.

the way down the staircase, and Peter Piper and Gustibus had to dart out of the drawing-room and pick them up, Ridiklis came staggering up from the kitchen quite out of breath.

"Oh! our house is going to be burned! Our house is going to be burned!" cried Meg and Peg clutching their brothers.

"Let us go and throw ourselves out of the window!" cried Kilmanskeg.

"I don't see how they can have the heart to burn a person's home!" said Ridiklis, wiping her eyes with her kitchen duster.

Peter Piper was rather pale, but he was extremely brave and remembered that he was the head of the family.

"Now, Lady Meg and Lady Peg and Lady Kilmanskeg," he said, "let us all keep cool."

"We sha'n't keep cool when they set our house on fire," said Gustibus. Peter Piper just snapped his fingers.

"Pooh!" he said. "We are only made of wood and it won't hurt a bit. We shall just snap and crack and go off almost like fireworks and then we shall be ashes and fly away into the air and see all sorts of things. Perhaps it may be more fun than anything we have done since

we were given to Cynthia's grandmother."

"But our nice old house! Our nice old Racketty-Packetty House," said Ridiklis. "I do so love it. The kitchen is so convenient—even though the oven won't bake any more."

And things looked most serious because the



THE COURTYARD OF TIDY CASTLE.

It must be carried down-stairs and burned. I will go and tell one of the footmen to come for it."

Meg and Peg and Kilmanskeg were in their attic and they all rushed out in such a hurry to get down-stairs that they rolled all

Nurse really was beginning to push the arm-chair away. But it would not move and I



"THEY MADE PETER PIPER THE DUKE OF TAGS."

will tell you why. One of my Fairies, who had come down the chimney when they were talking, had called me and I had come in a second with a whole army of my Workers, and though the Nurse could n't see them, they were all holding the chair tight down on the carpet so that it would not stir.

And I—Queen Crosspatch—myself—flew downstairs and made the footman remember that minute that a box had come for Cynthia and that he must take it upstairs to her nursery. If I had not been on the spot he would have forgotten it until it was too late. But just in the very nick of time up he came, and Cynthia sprang up as soon as she saw him.

"Oh!" she cried out, "it must be the doll who broke her little leg and was sent to the hospital. It must be Lady Patsy!"

And she opened the box which the footman gave her, and gave a little scream of joy, for there lay lady Patsy (her whole name was Patricia) in a lace-frilled night-gown, with her lovely leg in bandages, and a pair of tiny crutches and a trained nurse by her side.

That was how I saved them that time. There was such excitement over Lady Patsy and her little crutches and her nurse that nothing else was thought of and my Fairies pushed the arm-chair back and Racketty-Packetty House was hidden and forgotten once more.

The whole Racketty-Packetty family gave a great gasp of joy and sat down in a ring all at once, on the floor, mopping their foreheads with anything they could get hold of. Peter Piper used an antimacassar.

"Oh! we are obliged to you, Queen B-bell-Patch," he panted out, "But these alarms of fire are upsetting."

"You leave them to me," I said, "and I'll attend to them. Tip!" I commanded the Fairy nearest me. "You will have to stay about here and be ready to give the alarm when anything threatens to happen." And I flew away, feeling I had done a good morning's work. Well, that was the beginning of a great many things, and many of them were



"AND I—QUEEN CROSSPATCH—MYSELF—FLEW DOWNSTAIRS AND MADE THE FOOTMAN REMEMBER."

connected with Lady Patsy; and but for me there might have been unpleasantness.

Racketty-Packetty House

Of course the Racketty-Packetty dolls forgot about their fright directly, and began to enjoy themselves again as usual. That was their way. They never sat up all night with Trouble, Peter Piper used to say. And I told him they were quite right. If you make a fuss over trouble and put it to bed and nurse it and give it beef tea and gruel, you can never get rid of it.

Their great delight now was Lady Patsy.



"AND THE RACKETTY-PACKETTY HOUSE DOLLS
CROWDED AROUND THEIR WINDOW AND
ADORED HER."

They thought she was prettier than any of the other Tidy Castle dolls. She neither turned her nose up, nor looked down the bridge of it, nor laughed mockingly. She had dimples in the corners of her mouth and long curly lashes and her nose was saucy and her eyes were bright and full of laughs.

"She 's the clever one of the family," said Peter Piper. "I am sure of that."

She was treated as an invalid at first, of

course, and kept in her room; but they could see her sitting up in her frilled nightgown. After a few days she was carried to a soft chair by the window and there she used to sit and look out; and the Racketty-Packetty House dolls crowded round their window and adored her.

After a few days, they noticed that Peter Piper was often missing and one morning Ridiklis went up into the attic and found him sitting at a window all by himself and staring and staring.

"Oh! Duke," she said (you see they always tried to remember each others' titles). "Dear me, Duke, what are you doing here?"

"I am looking at her," he answered. "I'm in love. I fell in love with her the minute Cynthia took her out of her box. I am going to marry her."

"But she 's a lady of high degree," said Ridiklis, quite alarmed.

"That 's why she 'll have me," said Peter Piper in his most cheerful manner. "Ladies of high degree always marry the good-looking ones in rags and tatters. If I had a whole suit of clothes on, she would n't look at me. I 'm very good-looking, you know," and he turned round and winked at Ridiklis in such a delightful saucy way that she suddenly felt as if he was very good-looking, though she had not thought of it before.

"Hello," he said all at once. "I 've just thought of something to attract her attention. Where 's the ball of string?"

Cynthia's kitten had made them a present of a ball of string which had been most useful. Ridiklis ran and got it, and all the others came running upstairs to see what Peter Piper was going to do. They all were delighted to hear he had fallen in love with the lovely, funny Lady Patsy. They found him standing in the middle of the attic unrolling the ball of string.

"What are you going to do, Duke?" they all shouted.

"Just you watch," he said, and he began to make the string into a rope ladder—as fast as lightning. When he had finished it, he fastened one end of it to a beam and swung the other end out of the window.

(To be concluded in the January Number.)



Christmas Toys.
By
Emilie Benson Knipe.



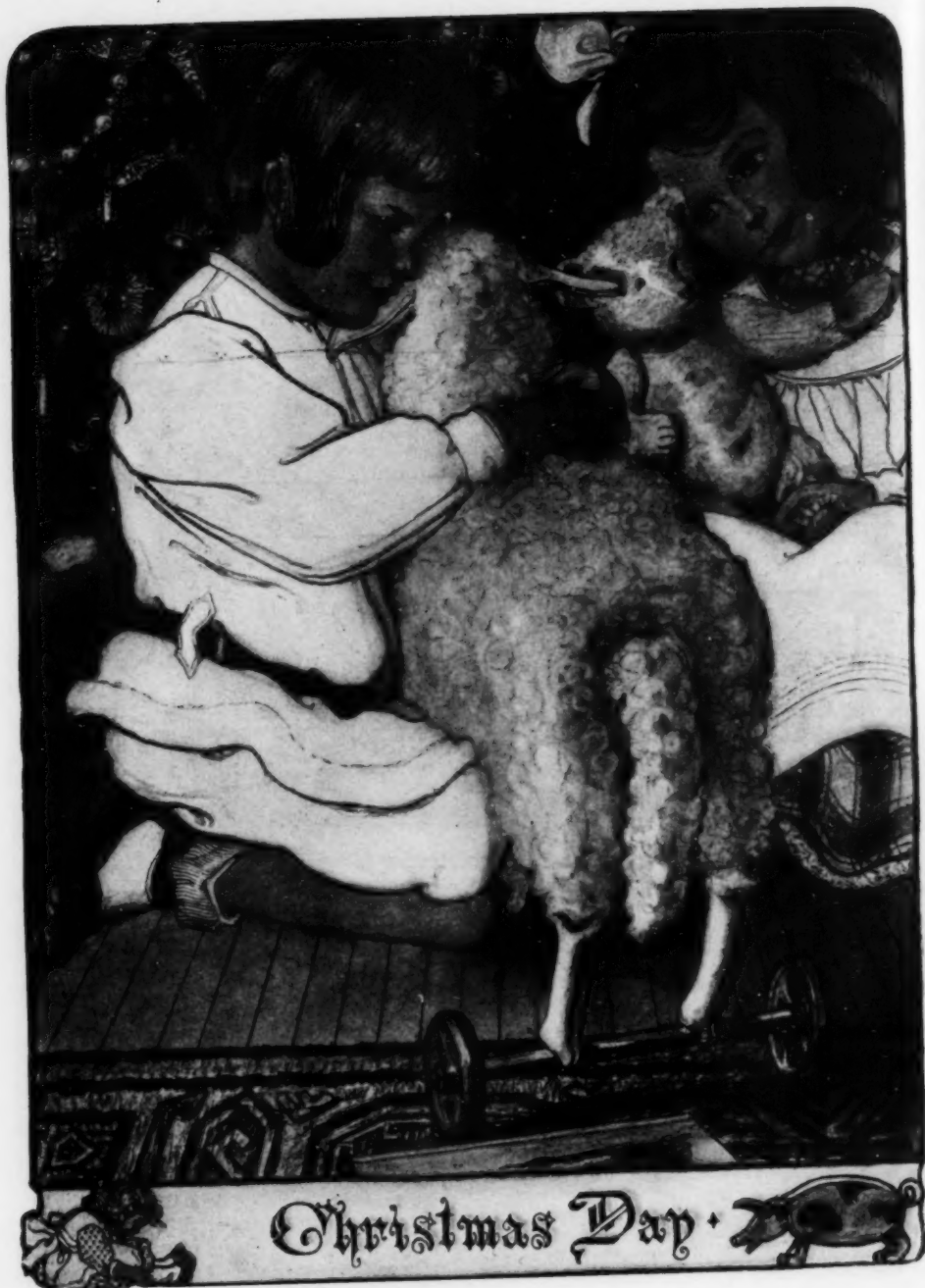
The Toy Shop.



Waiting for Santa Claus



Christmas Cakes



Christmas Day.

I Do!—Don't You?

By Isabel Ecclestone Mackay

"SUMMER," said the humming Bee,
"Summer is the time for me!

Richest fields of luscious clover,
Honey-cups all brimming over,
Not a cloud the long day through!
I like Summer best—don't you?"

Said the dainty Primrose sweet:
"Summer is the time of heat.

In the Spring when birds are calling
And the crystal rain is falling
All the world is cool and new!
I like Springtime best—don't you?"

Said the Apple: "Not at all,
There's no season like the Fall!

Golden skies thro' soft mists glowing
Where the golden-rod is growing,
Reaping done and harvest through—
I like Autumn best—don't you?"

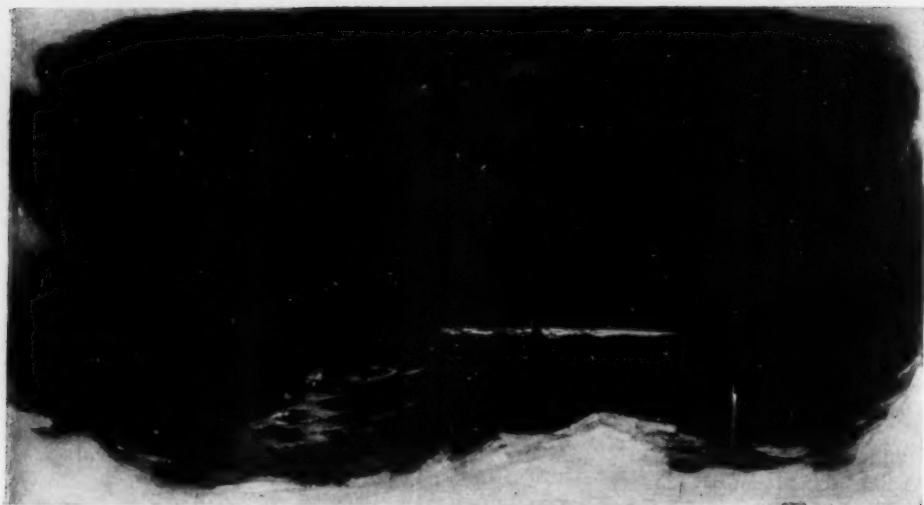
Said the Holly: "It is clear
Of all seasons of the year

Winter is the best and dearest,
Winds are stillest, skies are clearest—
Snowballs, sleighrides, Christmas—whew!
I like Winter best—*don't you?*"

"Santa Comes But Once a Year"

Drawn by E. B. Bird





The Skipper's Lad

A Christmas Tale

By Arthur Upson

Illustrated by W. L. Jacobs

NOTE.—There was formerly a superstition among Welsh sailors that, if their voyage found them at sea on Christmas Eve, they would be haunted with strange fears until they remembered the Night with a carol.

I

BLACK night, and biting keen, it was,
For Winter swept the sea;
The Skipper and the Bo's'n's mate
Aboard the *Jane Magee*
They heard the Bo's'n's whistle sound
Aloft so cheerlessly.

II

The *Jane Magee* of Portland Town
Bent through the gliding mist;
Whate'er she rode on lay unseen,
And all around was whist;
It was as though when night came on
All sound had been dismissed.

III

Now all was well, above, below,
Yet down the night had closed
So dreary in the first dogwatch
The sailors scarce reposed
As in their fo'c's'le bunks they lay
And dozed and woke and dozed.

IV

"What may this be?" Tom Wiggins cried;
"The sea-mist creeps and crowds,
And o'er the port rail I did see
Strange shapes among the clouds."
"And hark!" old Tompkins answered low,
"There's creaking in the shrouds!"

V

"I've sailed through storms," spoke trusty Bill,
"From Hatteras to Belle Isle;
But rare the gale that, ere she broke,
Held not like this a while."
They saw the Skipper's lad look up—
Then smiled to see him smile.

VI

"You laugh, my lad," the old tar cried;
"There's sommat on your tongue.
Heave sail, and let'er have the wind,
And so your song be sung!"
Then clear the lad's sweet voice arose
And round the cabin rung.

VII

"Come, messmates, let us have a song,
Together, every man!
At home the Yule log burns; at sea
Let 's show the Night we can
Keep Christmas cheer as merrily
Here off the Grand Menan.

VIII

"My father walks the deck to-night,
My mother 's on the land;
A fortnight 't is we left her there
Against the yellow sand;
She had a red cap on her head,
A kerchief in her hand."



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"LO, FULL UPON ITS ROCK APPEARED THE LIGHT OF GRAND MENAN."

IX

"I stood astern and signaled back
A-leaning from the rails;—
And well I cherish all her lore
And all the old sea-tales
She told me, from the store she had
Of her kin back in Wales.

X

" 'Davy'—says she—'this Christmas Eve
Will find you on the main;
The carol that I sang for you,
Oh, sing it there again,
Remembering the Holy Night,
Nor shall it be in vain!

XI

"For oft"—says she—"by night I've heard
My poor old father say
His ship and crew once hung in spell
Without Caermarthen Bay:—
Bethought him 't was the eve of Yule,
And carolled it away."

XII

"So, sailor lads, pipe all hands round
And set your voices free,
For I propose a cheery song
Upon the Christmas sea,
To hail the blessed evening
Of our Lord's Nativity!"

XIII

"Three cheers for Dave, our Skipper's lad!"
The sturdy voices cried;
The cabin timbers rang again
And shook from side to side;
The watch up in the crow's-nest heard—
"Three cheers!" his heart replied.

XIV

And then in tones full rich and strong
A well-known hymn they raise—
A simple carol all had known
In boyhood's homely days.
The Skipper feels the air less keen,
Less chill the circling haze.

XV

*"God rest you, merry gentlemen,
Wherever you may be:
God rest you all in field or hall
Or on the stormy sea;
For on this morn our Christ was born
That saveth you and me!"*

XVI

They sing as only sailors sing
Before the capstan-bars,
Or high amid the rigging
For their audience of stars—
And as they sing the mists break way
And scatter round the spars!

XVII

Then, through the sudden rift, a sharp
Great golden radiance ran
To melt around the good ship's prow,
And in another span
Lo, full upon its rock appeared
The Light of Grand Menan!

XVIII

The night was clean of mist as noon,
And all the stars hung free;—
The Skipper's lad rode sailor-back
To music of their glee
Till eight bells called the sta'board watch
That Christmas Eve at sea.



"THE SKIPPER'S LAD RODE SAILOR-BACK TO MUSIC OF THEIR GLEE."

Captain June

By Alice Hegan Rice

Author of "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch"; "Lovey Mary," etc.

With Pictures by C. D. Weldon

JUNE had never sat still so long during the whole six years of his existence. His slender body usually so restless and noisy was motionless; his hands too fond of teasing and mischief lay limp in his lap, even his tongue was still and that was the most wonderful of all. The only part of him that stirred was a sparkling pair of gray eyes that were looking out upon the strangest world they had ever seen.

The entire day had been one of enchantment, from the first waking hour when he discovered that the engines on the big steamer where he had lived for seventeen days had stopped, and that the boat was actually lying at anchor just off the coast of Japan. Seki San, his Japanese nurse who had cared for him ever since he was a baby, had been so eager to look out of the port-hole that she could scarcely attend to her duties, and the consequence was that he had to stand on the sofa and hook his mother's dress and help her with the little pins at the back of the neck while Seki San finished the packing. June could not dress himself but he knew a great deal about hooks and eyes and belt pins. When mother got in a hurry she lost things, and experience had taught him that it was much easier to fasten the pin where it belonged than to spend fifteen minutes on the floor looking for it.

At last when all the bags and trunks were ready, and the pilot and the health officer had come aboard, and everybody had waited until they could not wait another moment, the passengers were brought ashore in a wheezy, puffy launch, and were whirled up to the hotel in queer little buggies drawn by small brown men with bare legs and mushroom hats, and great sprawling signs on their backs.

Since then June had sat at a front window too engrossed to speak. Just below him lay the Bund or sea-road, with the wall beyond where the white waves broke in a merry splash and then fell back to the blue water below. Out in the harbor there were big black merchant steamers, and white men-of-

war, there were fishing schooners, and sampans with wobbly, crooked oars. But the street below was too fascinating to see much beyond it. Jinrikishas were coming and going with passengers from the steamers and the coolies laughed and shouted to each other in passing. Women and girls clattered by on wooden shoes with funny bald-headed, slant-eyed babies strapped on their backs. On the hotel steps, a little girl in a huge red turban and a gorgeous dress of purple and gold was doing handsprings, while two boys in fancy dress sang through their noses and held out fans to catch the pennies that were tossed from the piazza above.

If Cinderella, and Jack the Giant Killer, and Aladdin and Ali Baba had suddenly appeared, June would not have been in the least surprised. It was where they all lived, there could be no possible doubt as to that. Here was the biggest picture book he had ever seen, the coming true of all the fairy-tales he had ever heard.

He was dimly conscious that in the room behind him Seki San was unpacking trunks and boxes, and that his mother was coming and going and leaving hurried instructions. Once he heard her say, "Don't say anything to him about it, Seki, I'll tell him when he has to be told." But just then a man went by with a long pole across his shoulder and round baskets on each end, and in the baskets were little shining silver fishes, and June forgot all about what his mother was saying.

June's father was a young army officer stationed in the Philippines. June was born there but when still a baby he had been desperately ill and the doctor had sent him back to the States and said he must not return for many years. It was a great grief to them all that they had to be separated, but Capt. Royston had gotten two leaves of absence and come home to them, and now this summer June and his mother had come all the way from California to meet him in Japan.

June was not his real name. It was Robert Rogers Royston, Junior, but mother said

there never could be but one Robert for her, and father did not like the Rogers for a sur- that he was not as strong as other boys, and when his throat was very bad and his voice



THE TEA PARTY ON THE TRAIN. (SEE PAGE 119.)

name, so they called him Junior, and Junior soon got bobbed off into June. The name suited him too, for a sunshiner little chap you never saw. He never seemed to know

would not come, why he sat up in bed and whistled, just the keenest, cheeriest, healthiest whistle you ever heard.

It was on the indoor days that Seki San

used to tell him about her wonderful country across the sea, of the little brown houses with the flower gardens on the roofs, of the constant clatter, clatter of the wooden shoes, and the beautiful blossoms that rained down on you like snow.

"Where are the blossoms?" he demanded, suddenly turning in his chair, "You said they came down thick and white and that I could let them fall over my face."

Seki San did not answer, she was kneeling beside a very disconsolate figure that lay on the bed with face buried in the pillows. When June spoke, his mother sat up and pushed back her tumbled hair. She was a very little mother with round eyes and lips as red as June's, only now her eyes were red and her lips trembling.

"You may go in the other room, Seki San," she said, "I want to talk to June by himself."

June sidled up cautiously and took a seat near her on the bed. The one unbearable catastrophe to him was for his mother to cry. It was like an earthquake, it shook the very foundations on which all his joys were built. Sometimes when the postman forgot to leave a letter, and occasionally when he was sick longer than usual, mother cried. But those were dark, dreadful times that he tried not to think about. Why the tears should come on this day of all days he could not understand.

She put her arm around him and held him close for a long time before she spoke. He could feel the thump, thump of her heart as he leaned against her.

"June," she said at last, "you are going to be a soldier like father, are n't you?"

June's eyes brightened. "Yes, and carry a sword!" he said.

"There is something more than a sword that a soldier has to have."

"A gun?"

Mother shook her head. "It's courage, June! It's something I have n't got a scrap of. You'll have to be brave for us both!"

"I'm not afraid," declared June, "I go to bed in the dark and go places by myself or anything."

"I don't mean that way," said his mother, "I mean doing hard things just because they are right, staying behind for instance when—when somebody you love very much has to go away and leave you."

June sat up and looked at her. "Who's going away?" he demanded.

Mother's voice faltered. "Father's ter-

ribly ill with a fever, June. The letter was waiting here, it is from our old doctor in Manila, he says 'Come on first steamer, but don't bring the boy.'" The earth seemed suddenly to be slipping from under June's feet, he clutched at his mother's hand. "I am going too!" he cried in quick alarm, "I won't stay behind, I can't, mother!"

Her arm tightened about him, "But I don't dare take you, June, think of the terrible heat and the fever, and you are the only little boy I've got in the world, and I love you so!"

"I won't take the fever," protested June. "I'll be good. I'll mind every word Seki says."

"But Seki is n't going. She wants to take you home with her down to a little town on the Inland Sea, where there are all sorts of wonderful things to do. Would you stay with her, June, while I go to father?"

Her voice pleaded with eagerness and anxiety, but June did not heed it. Slipping from her arms, he threw himself on the floor and burst into a passion of tears. All the joys of the enchanted country had vanished, nothing seemed to count except that mother was thinking of leaving him in this strange land and sailing away from him across the sea.

"Don't cry so, June, listen," pleaded his mother. "I have not decided, I am trying to do what is best."

But June refused to be consoled. Over and over he declared that he would not stay, that he would rather have the fever and die than to be left behind.

By and by the room grew still, his mother no longer tried to pacify him, only the ticking of the little traveling clock on the table broke the stillness. He peeped through his fingers at the silent figure in the chair above him. He had never seen her look so white and tired, all the pretty smiles and dimples seemed gone forever, her eyes were closed and her lips were tightly drawn together. June crept close and slipped his hand into hers. In an instant her arms were about him.

"I don't know what to do, nor where to turn," she sobbed. "I am afraid to take you and afraid to leave you. What must I do?"

June was sure he did not know but when mothers are little and helpless and look at you as if you were grown up, you have to think of a way. He was standing beside her with his arm around her neck, and he could

feel her trembling all over. Father often said in his letters, "Be sure to take care of that little Mother of yours," but it had always seemed a joke until now. He sighed, then he straightened his shoulders:

"I 'll stay, Mudderdly," he said, then he added with a swallow, "Maybe it will help me to be a soldier when I get big!"

CHAPTER II

"SEKI SAN, look at the old woman with black teeth! What made them black? What have the little girls got flowers in their hair for? What are they ringing the bell for?"

Seki San sitting on her heels at the car window tried to answer all June's questions at once. The sad parting was over. Mrs. Royston had left in the night on the steamer they had crossed in, and the Captain and the Purser and all the passengers were going to take care of her until she got to Hong Kong, and after that it was only a short way to Manila, and once she was with Father, June felt that his responsibility ceased.

When they first boarded the train, June had sat very quiet. If you wink fast and swallow all the time, you can keep the tears back, but it does not make you feel any better inside.

"If God has got to take somebody," June said at length gloomily, "I think He might take one of my grandmothers. I have got four but one of them is an old maid."

"Oh no," said Seki, "she is n't."

"She is," persisted June, "she keeps every thing put away in little boxes and won't let me play with them. Seki, do you guess God would jes' as lieve for me to have a horn as a harp when I go to Heaven? I want a presser horn like they have in the band."

"But you will not go for many long times!" cried Seki, catching his hand as if he were about to slip away. "Look out of the window. See! They are giving the cow a bath!"

In a field nearby an old man and woman were scrubbing a patient-looking cow, and when the creature pulled its head away and cried because it did not want to get its face washed, June laughed with glee. After all, one could not be unhappy very long when every minute something funny or interesting was happening. At every station a crowd of curious faces gathered about the car window eager to catch a glimpse of the little foreign boy, and June, always ready to make friends, smiled at them and bobbed his head, which

made the boys and girls look at each other and laugh.

"We bow with our whole self, so," Seki explained putting her hands on her knees and bending her body very low, "and we never shake with the hands nor kiss together!"

"Don't the mothers ever kiss the children good-night?" asked June incredulously.

"Oh! no," said Seki, "we bow."

While June was thinking about this strange state of affairs, a man came close under the window, carrying a tray and calling: "*Bento! Eo Bento!*"

Seki San took some money from a little purse which she carried in her long sleeve, and handing it out to the man, received two square wooden boxes and a fat little tea-pot with a cup over its head like a cap.

"Are we going to have a tea-party?" asked June, scrambling down from his perch.

"So," said Seki San reaching under the seat and pulling out a tiny chest, in which were other cups and saucers and a jar of tea leaves, "we will have very nice tea-parties and you shall make the tea."

June, following instructions, put some of the tea in the small pot and poured the hot water over it, then he helped Seki San spread two paper napkins on the seat between them.

"Now," he said, "where 's the party?"

Seki San handed him one of the boxes and began to untie the string of the other.

"I have some sticks tied on to mine!" cried June, "two big ones and a tiny little one wrapped up in paper."

"That is your knife and fork and pick-tooth," said Seki San. "You must hold the sticks in one hand like this."

But June was too busy exploring the contents of the two trays that formed his box to stop to take a lesson in the use of chopsticks. The lower tray was full of smooth white rice. In the top one, was a bit of omelet and some fish, and a queer-looking something that puzzled June.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Guess it!" said Seki mysteriously, "guess it with your nose."

"It 's pickle!" cried June.

"Pickled sea-weed," said Seki, "and I have also brought you some Japanese candy that you pour out of a bottle."

There was no bread, no butter, no knife nor fork nor spoon, but June thought it was the very nicest tea-party he had ever been to. Sitting with his stocking feet curled up under him as Seki had hers, he clattered



"ALL DAY LONG THE BOYS PLAYED DOWN BY THE RIVER BANK." (SEE PAGE 122.)

his chop-sticks and spilt the rice all over the seat, while they both grew weak with laughter over his efforts to feed himself.

"Don't you wish you were a little boy, Seki San?" he asked when most of the lunch had disappeared.

"Why?" said Seki.

"'Cause," said June, "you 'd have such a good time playing with me all the time!"

"But no," said Seki seriously, "I must be big womans to take care of you."

"And tell me stories!" added June politely: "Tell me 'bout Tomi now."

"Tomi?" said Seki San, smiling. "You going see Tomi very soon, to-morrow, perhaps to-night. Tomi very bad little dog, makes a cross bark at all big peoples, but loves children. When Tomi very little his nose stick out, so—Japanese think it very ugly for little pug-dog's nose to stick out, so we push it in easy every day. Now Tomi has nice flat nose, but he sneeze all the time so—kerchoo, kerchoo, kerchoo."

June laughed at the familiar story, but suddenly he sobered:

"Say, Seki, I don't think it was very nice to push his nose in; I would n't like to have my nose pushed in so I would have to sneeze all the rest of my life."

"Ah! but he must be beautiful! Tomi would not be happy if his nose stuck out when other pug-doggies had nice flat nose. Tomi is very happy, he is grateful."

It was quite dark when they reached their destination; June had been asleep and when he slipped out on the platform he could not remember at all where he was; Seki's mother and her sisters and brothers besides all the relatives far and near had come to welcome her back from America, and quite a little crowd closed in about her, bowing and bowing and chattering away in Japanese.

June stood, rather forlornly, to one side. This time last night Mother had been with him, he could speak to her and touch her, and now—it was a big, strange world he found himself in, and even Seki seemed his Seki no longer.

Suddenly he felt something rub against his leg, and then he heard a queer sound that somehow sounded familiar. Stooping down he discovered a flat-nosed little pug that was kissing his hand just as if it had been brought up in America.

"It 's Tomi," cried June in delight, and the pug, recognizing his name, capered more

madly still, only stopping long enough to sneeze between the jumps.

Ten minutes later June was sitting beside Seki San in a broad jinrikisha, rushing through the soft night air, down long gay streets full of light and color and laughter, round sharp corners, up steep hills, over bridges where he could look down and see another world of paper lanterns and torches, and always the twinkling legs and the big round hat of the jinrikisha man bobbing steadily along before him.

"Is it like a story book all the time?"

Seki San laughed: "Oh, no, June, story-book land 's back in America, where the grown-up houses are, and the rich, fine furnitures, and the strange ways. This is just home, my very dear home, and I have such glad feelings to be here!"

June cuddled close and held her hand, and if he felt a wee bit wistful, and wiped his eyes once in a while on her sleeve, he did it very carefully, so that Seki would have nothing to spoil the glad feeling in her heart at being home again.

CHAPTER III

THE new life which opened up for June was brimming over with interest. Seki San lived in a regular toy house, which was like a lot of little boxes fitted into one big one. One whole side was open to the garden and a tiny railed balcony ran around outside the rooms. The walls were made of white paper, and when the sun shone all sorts of pretty shadows danced on them, and when it rained everybody ran about to put up the wooden screens, and fasten the house up snug and tight until the shower was over. A flight of low steps cut in the rock led down to a bamboo wicket, and here green lizards sunned themselves all day and blinked in friendly fashion at the passer-by.

The night June arrived he had looked about blankly and said:

"But Seki there is n't any furniture in your house; have n't you got any bed, or chairs or table?"

And Seki had laughed and told the others and everybody laughed until June thought he had been impolite.

"I like it," he hastened to add, "it 's the nicest house I ever was in, 'cause, don't you see, there is n't anything to break."

It was quite wonderful to see how easily one can get along without furniture. After

one has sat on his heels, and slept on the floor and eaten off a tiny table no bigger than a foot stool, it seems the most sensible thing in the world. June did hang up one picture and that was a photograph of his mother. She had left him two, but one was taken with her hat on.

"I don't like for her always to look as if she was going away!" he said to Seki San when she wanted to put them both up.

The life, interesting as it was, might have proven lonely, had it not been for Seki's younger brother, Toro, who was two years older than June. Although neither could understand a word the other said, yet a very great friendship had sprung up between them. "We understand just like dogs," June explained to Seki San.

All day long the two boys played down by the river bank, paddling about in the shallow shimmering water, building boats and putting them out to sea, sailing their kites from the hill top, or best of all, sitting long hours on the parade grounds watching the drilling of the soldiers.

Sometimes when they were very good, Seki San would get permission for them to play in the daimyo's garden, and those days were red letter days for June. The garden was very old and very sacred to the Japanese, for in long years past it had belonged to an old feudal lord, and now it was the property of the Emperor.

From the first June had cherished a secret belief that somewhere in its leafy bowers he would come across the Sleeping Beauty. It was all so old and so still that even the breezes whispered as they softly stirred the tree-tops. In the very heart of the garden a little blue lake smiled up at the sky above, and all about its edges tall flags of blue and gold threw their bright reflections in the water below. A high-arched bridge all gray

with moss, led from one tiny island to another, while along the shore old stone lanterns, very stiff and stern, stood sentinel over the quiet of the place. Here and there a tempting little path led back into mysterious deeps of green, and June followed each one with the half expectancy of finding the cobwebby old place, and the vine-grown steps, and the Sleeping Beauty within.

One day when they were there, Toro became absorbed in a little house he was building for the old stork who stood hour after hour under the cool shadow of the arching bridge. June, getting tired of the work, wandered off alone, and as he went deeper into the tangle of green, he thought more and more of the Sleeping Beauty.

It was cool and mysterious under the close hanging boughs, and the sunshine fell in white patches on the head of an old stone Buddha, whose nose was chipped off, and whose forefinger was raised in a perpetual admonition to all little boys to be good. Just ahead a low flight of steps led up to a dark recess where a shrine was half concealed by a tangle of vines and underbrush. June cautiously mounted the steps; he was making believe that he was the prince in the fairytale, and that when he should push through the barrier of brier roses he would find the Sleeping Beauty within the shrine.

As he reached the top step, a sound made him pause and catch his breath. It was not the ripple of the falling water that danced past him down the hillside, it was not the murmur of the wind in the bamboos overhead; it was the deep regular breathing very close to him of some one asleep. For a moment June wanted to run away, but then he remembered the golden hair and blue eyes of the princess and with heart beating very fast, he pushed through the underbrush and stumbled over some one lying in the grass.

(To be continued.)



TED'S FOOLISH WISH

"I WISH I WAS AN OWL"
SAID TEDDY, WITH A SCOWL,
"CAUSE THEN I COULD SIT UP THE WHOLE NIGHT THROUGH."
BUT SOME FAIRIES HEARD HIM SCOLD,
AND HERE YOU MAY BEHOLD



HOW THEY



MADE THAT



AWFUL WISH



COME TRUE !

CHARLES FITCH LESTER

The Lieutenant and the Lions



By Kent Packard



H, a strictly naval person, and a man of general fame,
Was Lieut. Gadzooks Peters-Brown of H. M. S. "The
Flame."

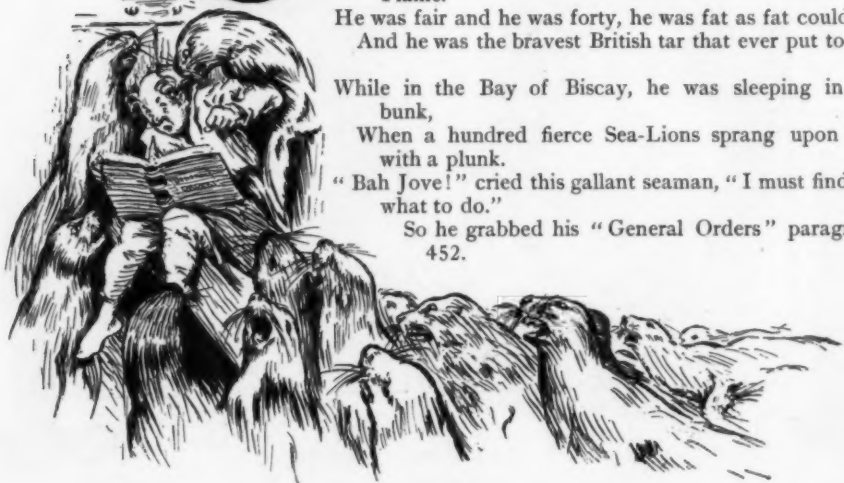
He was fair and he was forty, he was fat as fat could be,
And he was the bravest British tar that ever put to sea.

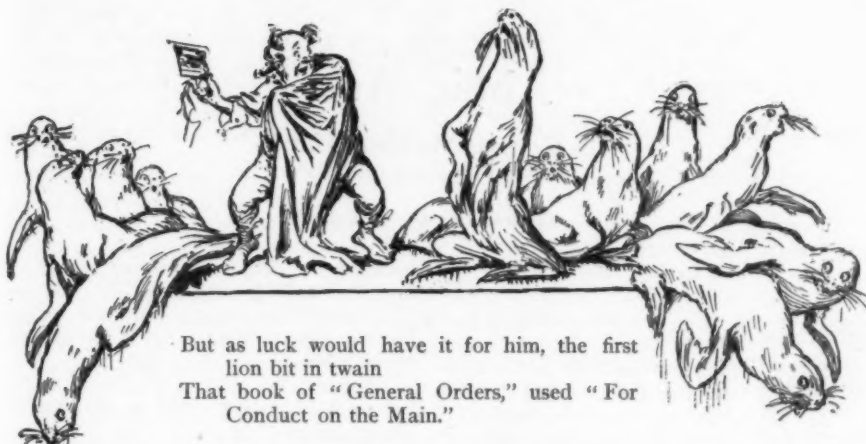
While in the Bay of Biscay, he was sleeping in his
bunk,

When a hundred fierce Sea-Lions sprang upon him
with a plunk.

"Bah Jove!" cried this gallant seaman, "I must find out
what to do."

So he grabbed his "General Orders" paragraph
452.





But as luck would have it for him, the first
lion bit in twain
That book of "General Orders," used "For
Conduct on the Main."

And you know, my gentle reader, the sea-lion is a beast
That dwells in ocean's surges, twenty fathoms at the least,
So when that "extra dry" blue book pervaded his inside,
That poor, misguided animal, he laid him down and died.

When they saw this, his companions to the sea raced back in flight,
For the fate of their brave leader had endued their hearts with fright.
But Lieut. Gadzooks Peters-Brown threw out his chest with glee,
And exclaimed, "I *am* the greatest thing that ever went to sea!"

And a medal from the Admiralty engraved with his full name,
Hands down to his posterity his everlasting fame.



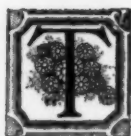
Abbie Ann

By George Madden Martin

Author of the "Emmy Lou" Stories

Illustrated by C. M. Relyea

CHAPTER II



THE next evening shortly before Abbie Ann's bedtime, her father pushed his books aside and wheeling his chair around from the desk, took her on his knee. He had his office at home, and the two generally spent their evenings here, he at work, she with her dolls.

There was a space between the wall and the end of the desk that almost seemed to have been meant for a doll-house, and her father let Abbie Ann use a drawer of the desk for her playthings.

Once a lady came to Coal City with her husband who had business at the mine, and they stayed over night, and she kept saying "poor child," and every time she said it she stroked Abbie Ann's hair. Then while the two gentlemen were out, she brushed up the office hearth, and put things around in the places where she said they ought to be. The office being at home, there was no covering except a coat of paint on the floor, or on the floor of the hall. The color of the soil of Coal City is red, and red clay foot-prints on a painted floor show discouragingly. After the lady had brushed around for a while, she gave up, and saying "poor child" some more, bade Abbie Ann bring her all her stockings that she might darn them.

Afterward Abbie asked her father why the lady said, "poor child," but he only looked out of the window across the valley and did not reply. Unless she was in a temper, whenever she saw her father glance that way, out across the valley, Abbie Ann changed the subject, for something seemed to tell her then that father was worried. So she saved the question, and later asked Mr. McEwan why the lady had said "poor child."

That person, surveying small Abbie Ann, lifted his forehead in ridges and gazed debatingly. Her hair was in tangle, one shoestring was broken and the tongue of the shoe

hung loose; there was red clay on her stockings, and a long scratch on her face, results of a scramble up the mountain side for blackberries; also there was a slit in her dress skirt, where a briar had caught it.

"Because," said Mr. McEwan solemnly, "there is so little demand on the market for young savages."

But this had been some time before, in one of the intervals between teachers.

This evening Abbie Ann's father, pushing his ledger away lifted her to his knee. Now her father was that sort of person who, a dripping umbrella in his hand, stands in a doorway, and looks helplessly around until the women folk rush to him and take it. But there were no women folk to take care of him and Abbie Ann. Her father loved the small bundle of herself, tears, smudges, and all, better even than he himself knew, better than all else in the world, but he did n't know what to do with her. His attitude with Abbie Ann was very like that of himself with the umbrella.

He lifted her to his knee now and stroked her hair awkwardly. It made her think of the lady. She endured it, hopeful that it would n't last long. Perhaps it was because it was n't natural to her father that it made her embarrassed. She was right. It stopped.

"How brave to do her duty is my wilful offspring?" suddenly he inquired.

Now wilful offspring meant Abbie Ann. It was what still another lady brought to Coal City to teach her, had called her.

Abbie had no idea what wilful offspring meant, but she did know the lady had not meant it to be complimentary.

"How brave?" father was repeating.

Abbie Ann thought of the day before on the freight train.

"Not so brave," she concluded.

Which evidently was disconcerting. Her father began to stroke her hair again, and Abbie to endure it. "But brave enough, I am sure, to stand by her duty?" he suggested.

He spoke so uneasily, it sounded so conciliatory, that Abbie Ann grew dubious. His voice sounded solemn too, almost as if they were in church, which in itself was an alarming sensation, Coal City having Church at the most, perhaps three times a year, when a minister could be secured.

"Brave enough, I am sure," said father, "to stand by her duty."

"I,—I don't know," faltered Abbie Ann.

"For father has made up his mind to be brave enough to show his little daughter her duty," he continued. But here he paused, paused so long, and appeared to be pondering so hard that Abbie Ann to show how entirely at ease and free from embarrassment she was began to twist his mustache to stand out, a sharp point each side above his pointed beard. Then when he looked at her so earnestly above the fierce mustache, Abbie Ann forgot she was embarrassed and laughed.

"Such a little girl," said her father, hopelessly, "such a little child."

"I was only pretending," she hastened to assure him, "I'm listening."

"And it is only for a few years at most," her father then said, as if continuing a former thought; was he talking to her, or to himself?

"What's for a few years?" asked Abbie Ann.

At this he seemed to come back to her and hastened to stroke her hair, "I have been meditating it for some time," he confessed, even guiltily, "and yesterday's happening determined me."

But it was to be seen that Abbie Ann's tall bearded parent eyed the inquiring-eyed object on his knee with considerable apprehension. He also continued to stroke her hair vigorously.

"I am going to take you away from Coal City, and put you at school," he told her.

There was a pause, there seemed no support under Abbie Ann; there was a singing in her ears and a dryness in her mouth. Coal City meant all she knew. "Away" meant that unknown void and desolation the cars were rushing toward yesterday, and its inhabitants were summed up in the lady who called her "poor child" and made her uncomfortable.

"But I don't want to go to school," she rejoined, and her voice sounded so far off, even to herself, and strange, that she threw herself upon him and clung to him, suddenly and fiercely, "I don't want to go to school, I don't want to."

Father said nothing. The silence was alarming. She burrowed her head deeper into his coat collar, "Why can't I have a teacher here?" came up in muffled tones from Abbie Ann.

"We have tried it, and how long have they stayed?"

It sounded as if it meant what it said, that voice this time.

"They stayed longer than the cooks," came up from Abbie Ann, sulkily, and unwisely; for the number of cooks brought to Coal City for the superintendent's household, from all points far and near, had become a jocular matter up and down the railroad; none could or would stand the isolation of the life. Her father had grown as sensitive about cooks as was Abbie about teachers.

So at this he spoke decidedly. Perhaps the allusion had nettled him.

"The teaching is not all," he said, "you need to be with other children," he was quoting the words of the lady, "and you need to have what only different surroundings can give you."

"I don't," said Abbie Ann. There was no doubt as to the finality of her utterance. She had slipped down off his knee and stood, firm planted on the floor. A red spot was burning on either cheek. Suddenly she stamped her foot, and stamped again; then she seized the nearest thing, it chanced to be her youngest child, and flung the luckless infant across the room. This done, simultaneously, as it were, with the dull thud of its unhappy head against the wall, Abbie Ann threw herself upon the floor, prone, and beat with her small hands and feet thereon.

It was not the first time this big man had watched his little daughter thus, nor yet the first time he had wondered what he ought to do about it; he had met a mine disaster with a promptness that saved his men's lives; he had averted a strike by a just grasp of the situation; he had quelled a riot in a neighboring district during the miseries of actual strike there; but those things were a matter of course, in mere line with a man's work, and he thought no more about them. But what to do with one small daughter who flung herself on the floor and beat with her fists and feet thereon, this big man did not know.

Meanwhile the heap of red tangles, skirts, arms and legs, there before him, began to be shaken by sobs. Abbie Ann usually grew more reasonable at the weeping stage. Her father gazed down upon her. Those small

moaned "ohs," on his little daughter's lips hurt him surprisingly. He would try reason. He offered it somewhat diffidently, seeing that Abbie Ann had a disconcerting way of rejecting it.

"Suppose," he said, "that I failed in my duty to you now, and lived to feel my own and your reproaches?"

His little girl, sitting up at this, to listen, here shook her head violently, so violently the red curls flung about wildly. She was hazy as to what it was he might some day feel, but from her position, it was safest to combat everything. "That would n't never, never be,—," she stated, with general vagueness of statement, but much decision.

But her father thought differently, and said moreover that she was too young to know.

"And further," he added, "it is my daughter's duty to help father to do his." He spoke so solemnly it might have been Church again. Abbie Ann hugged her knees. It would never do to weaken now.

But he went on. The words seemed to come with effort, at first, but later, something came into them that made them easier. Was it tenderness? Or was it sad laughter?

"Once Abbie Ann—there was a little girl with hair and eyes like yours. She lived in a city, and used to come by a certain gate every day, the last little girl in the procession coming from a neighboring boarding-school for the daily walk. There was a boy generally hanging on that gate, that in time that little girl came to nod to. Perhaps,—some day—you may be shown some medals and some prize books laid away by persons who loved this little girl, that will prove to you how faithfully she did her duty."

Abbie Ann had wriggled along the floor, still embracing her knees, the better to hear. Now she got up and leaned against her father's knee. The story rather than the moral of it, had seized her.

"Who was she, the little girl, father?"

"Your mother, Abbie."

There was a silence. Nobody spoke. Little as she had been, Abbie Ann seemed to herself to remember,—

Therefore she rose up and flung herself upon him and wetted his poor collar with a fresh burst of tears; "I 'll be good, I 'll be good,—," she whispered.

"I know, I know,—," said father, in return, gathering her up, and this time forgetting to stroke her hair.

Then Abbie Ann sat up. Had she known

her little nose was puffed like a ripe red cherry, she might have been disconcerted.

"Who was the little boy?" she asked. She liked that story.

"His name in those days, was, Johnnie, Johnnie Richardson."

Abbie Ann laughed delightedly. It was father himself, that boy, father's name was John Richardson!

He was saying more: "And I have chosen to send you to this same school, because the same teacher is there who taught your mother? Will this help you to go and try to be happy?"

He never had talked just this way to her before. She felt solemn, and began to cry a little again, but sobbed her willingness to try.

And it was settled, and big, bearded John Richardson drew a breath.

CHAPTER 'III

BUT the going did not seem possible by the next day, and Abbie Ann kept her face swollen by weeping afresh every time she thought about it, feeling herself a mistreated little girl, sent off into the great, terrifying world with no one caring, a little girl gotten rid of by being put at a terrible place called a school. Very well, she would go, since she had promised, she would go, but once there she would cry herself ill, oh, very ill, and perhaps die, and—

At this point Abbie Ann burst into tears again.

Mr. McEwan came up that evening to supper, as he often did, in order, he said, to help them out.

This was because of a peculiarity of Fabe, the cook. Mr. McEwan had brought Fabe from Washington on returning from his vacation some time before. Fabe having hitherto officiated in restaurants and boarding-houses, said he did not know how to cook for two. And true enough, when he made, for instance, a pudding, it was so liberal an affair, that Mr. Richardson and Abbie Ann continued to eat pudding day after day, until it was gone. In a way it might have been said to save Fabe trouble, and it was owing to this peculiarity that Mr. McEwan said he came to meals to help them out.

This evening after supper they sat on the side porch. One did not see the station from here, or the chutes, or the coke ovens, only the anvil-shaped valley with the enclosing mountains making a purple rim around.

Across on the opposite slope of the valley stood the Church, ugly, it is true, but the miners had built it themselves; there was a graveyard by the side of the church and in it a tall white shaft. Abbie Ann's young mother lay beneath that shaft; it was while she was among them that the miners had built the Church.

Out on the porch this evening Abbie Ann told Mr. McEwan about her going away; he had been talking business to her father all through supper, and she had had no opportunity to tell him before; her father, cigar in hand, listened, too, and very cruel, and very

else did you suppose boarding-schools were for?"

This was a new phase of things. "Really?" asked Abbie Ann.

Mr. McEwan turned his head; he was sitting on the porch railing smoking, "Oh, Fabe," he called.

Fabe came out from the dining-room; he was very black and very shiny, and he wore a paper cap. When he first arrived at Coal City he said his name was Fabe Winbush; but Mr. McEwan said that he was too modest to tell it all, that his whole name was Fabacious Vespuscious McGruder Daniel Winbush.

Abbie Ann had asked Fabe if it really was, whereupon he showed all his teeth, but he never said.

When he came to the door Mr. McEwan asked him, "How about a cake, Fabe? None of your little miching measurements, either, but an ample, sizable, cake-walking article, pink and white perhaps, and fruity, and say, nutty, within?"

Fabe grinned, indeed he always grinned at Mr. McEwan. "Th' ain't no trouble 'bout its being sizable, if it 's a *big* cake you want,—"

"And candy," said Mr. McEwan, "the real thing in Allegheny maple sugar, with hickory nut meats through. I mean to scour the mountains for the nuts myself."

But after Mr. McEwan had gone, the shamed feeling came back upon Abbie that she had not been honest. She went slowly and stood by father. He was on the settee, his arm stretched along the railing.

"I won't," she said, "I won't any more," and she touched his hand on the railing. His closed on hers. Then he lifted her to the bench by him.

In the valley below them, a mist was floating over the low-lands. The young moon shining down upon it, made it a moving silver sea. But above the mists, on the opposite



"ONCE, ABBIE ANN, THERE WAS A LITTLE GIRL WITH HAIR AND EYES LIKE YOURS."

terrible it sounded, the way she started it. Somehow, by the time she reached the end, she felt ashamed.

But Mr. McEwan was making notes on the back of an envelop. "Albemarle County pippins, maple sugar, hickory nuts,—" he was muttering.

"What?" Abbie Ann asked him.

"H'm," he was still jotting down, "did you speak,—oh,—to be sure, I was planning for the Thanksgiving box; but that is going too fast, you have n't gone yet,—"

"Box?" asked Abbie.

Mr. McEwan blinked, and his red head nodded across at her red head, confidentially. "At Thanksgiving," said he, "and at Christmas, and on birthdays, and at Easter; what

slope across the valley, stood the shaft, tall and gleaming. Abbie sat very still, she had no idea why. The sheep bells from some hill side tinkled faintly. It hurt, not that Abbie knew that it did, she only knew something made her creep closer to father.

Not that Abbie thought these things, she only sat close within the circle of father's arm, while Fabe's voice, mellow and low, came crooningly out from the kitchen, that kitchen which had so shocked the strange lady, to the rattle of his pots and pans.

CHAPTER IV

WHEN Mr. Richardson and Abbie Ann left Coal City in September, the whole community was at the station to see them off, the miners, their wives, the older children, the babies, Mr. McEwan and Fabe.

Abbie felt important. She even had a trunk of her own and on one end of it, it read:

Abbie Ann Richardson.

Down at the junction there lived a lady who sewed and she had made the new clothes; that is she and Abbie had studied the fashion papers together, and the lady had sent down to Cincinnati for the patterns and the materials. Mr. Richardson seemed doubtful at the results, but said if Abbie and the lady were satisfied, they were the ones to know. And Mr. McEwan said they were too plain, that mere *gilt* braid did well enough for Coal City,

but for metropolitan purposes, it ought to be gold. Since which Abbie had been a little troubled in her mind.

Every one had brought her something for a "good-by"; indeed she could not take them all, the peach pie and the pet squirrel, for instance. Mr. McEwan said he would take care of the pie.

Everybody waved until the train, eastward bound, was rounding the curve; and Abbie



"MR. MCEWAN WAS MAKING NOTES ON THE BACK OF AN ENVELOP."

It is a question if Abbie even rightly understood that she and father in their time must come to cross the Valley also to where that shaft stood; it was not that kind of fear, for only vaguely did Abbie Ann know what the shaft meant. Yet the beauty of the evening, and the young moon on the mists, and the shaft across the valley, stayed on the little heart. It is good that it should have; The Star stayed with Dickens' child.

hanging out the window, while her father clutched her skirts, waved too. It made her new ring glisten. Mr. McEwan had given her that. The green diamond in the other one had chipped off in discouraging fashion, and finally had fallen out, while this new one had for a setting a little, clear, dark-blue stone, that glistened.

"Not so rare a gem, perhaps," Mr. McEwan had explained, "but with better wearing qualities. And blue, you know, is true."

Abbie Ann, gazing at her ring, resolved she would be true. A verse had accompanied the ring. It read:

"I knew by her hair that so gracefully curled
Around her pink ears,
that she ringlets held dear,
So I said, 'Of all natural things in the world,
A ring let me give her
before she leaves here.'"

Abbie Ann gave Mr. McEwan a pin, which originally had a black bead for head until she dipped it in sealing wax. He had it on at the station in his tie, a green and blue necktie, where it showed beautifully.

That night Mr. Richardson and Abbie Ann reached the city, going to a hotel. The next day they went to the school.

It was a large, square house of red brick, with white shutters, and the door knob and the door bell shone. The maid who answered the ring, and who showed them into a parlor, was square herself, and staid and neat and noiseless. Everything in the room seemed to

shine too, the furniture, the fender, the mirror between the windows, the chandeliers. Straight back mahogany chairs sat straight back against the walls.

Abbie felt her heart sinking. The truth was, though she did not know it, in the



"EVERY ONE HAD BROUGHT HER SOMETHING FOR A 'GOOD-BY.'"

midst of this depressing propriety she felt herself a very small somebody indeed, and she resented the feeling.

Then a lady came in, whom Mr. Richardson, rising to meet, addressed as Miss Owsley.

(To be continued.)

"The Red Ball Is Up!"

"Good Skating on the Pond!"



HARRISON GATZ

The New Boy at Hilltop

By Ralph Henry Barbour

Author of "The Crimson Sweater," etc.

CHAPTER I

A BAD BEGINNING

HILLTOP School closed its Fall Term with just ninety-five students; it opened again two weeks later, on the third of January, with ninety-six; and thereby hangs this tale.

Kenneth Garwood had been booked for Hilltop in the Autumn, but circumstances had interfered with the family's plans. Instead he journeyed to Moritzville on the afternoon of the day preceding the commencement of the new term, a very cold and blustery January afternoon, during much of which he sat curled tightly into a corner of his seat in the poorly heated day coach, which was the best the train afforded, and wondered why the Connecticut Valley was so much colder than Cleveland, Ohio. He had taken an early train from New York, and all the way to Moritzville had sought with natural eagerness for sight of his future schoolmates. But he had been unsuccessful. When Hilltop returns to school it takes the mid-afternoon express which reaches Moritzville just in time for dinner, whereas Kenneth reached the school before it was dark, and at a quarter of five was in undisputed possession, for the time being, of Number 12, Lower House.

"We are putting you," the Principal had said, "with Joseph Brewster, a boy of about your own age and a member of your class. He is one of our nicest boys, one of whom we are very proud. You will, I am certain, become good friends. Mr. Whipple here will show you to your room. Supper is at six. Afterwards, say at eight o'clock, I should like you to see me again here at the office. If there is anything you want you will find the Matron's room at the end of the lower hall. Er—will you take him in charge, Mr. Whipple?"

On the way across the Campus, between banks of purple-shadowed snow and under leafless elms which creaked and groaned dismally in the wind, Kenneth reached the firm conclusion that there were two persons at Hilltop whom he was going to dislike cor-

dially. One was the model Joseph Brewster, and the other was Mr. Whipple. The instructor was young, scarcely more than twenty-three, tall, sallow, near-sighted and taciturn. He wore an unchanging smile on his thin face and spoke in a soft, silky voice that made Kenneth want to trip him into one of the snow banks.

Lower House, so called to distinguish it from the other dormitory, Upper House, which stood a hundred yards higher on the hill, looked very uninviting. Its windows frowned dark and inhospitable and no light shone from the hall as they entered. Mr. Whipple paused and searched unsuccessfully for a match.

"I fear I have left my match-box in my study," he said at length. "Just a moment, please, Garwood, and I will—"

"Here 's a match, sir," interrupted Kenneth.

"Ah!" Mr. Whipple accepted the match and rubbed it carefully under the banister rail. "Thank you," he added as a tiny pale flame appeared at the tip of the side bracket. "I trust that the possession of matches, my boy, does not indicate a taste for tobacco on your part?" he continued smiling deprecatingly.

Kenneth took up his suit-case again.

"I trust not, sir," he said. Mr. Whipple blinked behind his glasses.

"Smoking is, of course, prohibited at Hilltop."

"I think it is at most schools," Kenneth replied gravely.

"Oh, undoubtedly! I am to understand, then, that you are not even in the least addicted to the habit?"

"Well, sir, it is n't likely you 'll ever catch me at it," said Kenneth imperturbably. The instructor flushed angrily.

"I hope not," he said in a silky voice, "I sincerely hope not, Garwood,—for your sake!"

He started up the stairs and Kenneth followed, smiling wickedly. He had n't made a very good beginning, he told himself, but Mr. Whipple irritated him intensely. After

the instructor had closed the door softly and taken his departure, Kenneth sat down in an easy-chair and indulged in regrets.

"I wish I had n't been so fresh," he muttered ruefully. "It does n't do a fellow any good to get the teachers down on him. Not that I'm scared of that old boy, though! Doctor Randall is n't so bad, but if the rest of the teachers are like Whipple I don't want to stay. Well, dad said I need n't stay after this term if I don't like it. Guess I can stand three months, even of Whipple! I hope Brewster is n't quite as bad. Maybe, though, they'll give me another room if I kick. Don't see why I can't have a room by myself, anyhow. I guess I'll get dad to write and ask for it. Only maybe a chap in moderate circumstances like me is n't supposed to have a room all to himself."

He chuckled softly and looked about him.

Number 12 consisted of a small study and a good-sized sleeping room opening off. The study was well furnished, even if the carpet was worn bare in spots and the green-topped table was a mass of ink blots. There were two comfortable arm-chairs and two straight-backed chairs, the aforementioned table, two bookcases, one on each side of the window, a wicker waste basket and two or three pictures. Also there was an inviting window seat heaped with faded cushions. On the whole, Kenneth decided, the study, seen in the soft radiance of the drop-light, had a nice "homey" look. He crossed over and examined the bedroom,

drawing aside the faded brown chenille curtain to let in the light. There was n't much to see, two iron beds, two chiffoniers, two chairs, a trunk bearing the initials "J. A. B." and a washstand. The floor was bare save



"WELL, SIR, IT IS N'T LIKELY YOU'LL EVER CATCH ME AT IT," SAID KENNETH."

for three rugs, one beside each bed and one in front of the washstand. The two windows had white muslin curtains and a couple of uninteresting pictures hung on the walls. He dropped the curtain at the door, placed his suit-case on a chair and opened it. For the next few minutes he was busy distributing its contents. To do this it was necessary to

light the gas in the bedroom and as it flared up, its light was reflected from the gleaming backs of a set of silver brushes which he had placed a moment before on the chiffonier. He paused and eyed them doubtfully.

"Gee!" he muttered. "I can't have those out. I'll have to buy some brushes."

He gathered them up and tumbled them back into his suit-case. Finally, with everything put away, he took off coat and vest, collar and cuffs, and proceeded to wash up. And while he is doing it let us have a good look at him.

He was fourteen years of age, but he looked older. Not that he was large for his age; it was rather the expression of his face that added that mythical year or so. He looked at once self-reliant and reserved. At first glance one might have thought him conceited, in which case one would have done him an injustice. Kenneth had travelled a good deal and had seen more of the world than has the average boy of his age, and this had naturally left its impress on his countenance. I can't honestly say that he was handsome, and I don't think you will be disappointed to hear it. But he was good-looking, with nice, quiet gray eyes, an aquiline nose, a fairly broad mouth whose smiles meant more for being infrequent, and a firm, rather pointed chin of the sort which is popularly supposed to, and in Kenneth's case really did, denote firmness of character. His hair was brown and quite guiltless of curl. His body was well set up and he carried himself with a little backward thrust of the head and shoulders which might have seemed arrogant, but was n't, any more than was his steady, level manner of looking at one.

Presently, having donned his clothes once more, he picked up a book from the study table, pulled one of the chairs toward the light and set himself comfortably therein, stretching his legs out and letting his elbows sink into the padded leather arms. And so he sat when, after twenty minutes or so, there were sounds outside the building plainly denoting the arrival of students, sounds followed by steps on the stairs, shouts, laughter, happy greetings, the thumping of bags, the clinking of keys. And so he sat when the door of Number 12 was suddenly thrown wide open and a merry face, flushed with the cold, looked amazedly upon him from between the high, shaggy, upturned collar of a voluminous dark gray ulster and the soft visor of a rakishly tilted cap.

CHAPTER II

MAKING FRIENDS

AND while Kenneth looked back, he felt his prejudices melting away. Surely one could n't dislike for very long such a jolly, mischievous-looking youth as this! Of Kenneth's own age was the newcomer, a little heavier, yellow-haired and blue-eyed, at once impetuous and good-humored. But at this moment the good-humor was not greatly in evidence. Merriment gave place to surprise, surprise to resentment on the boy's countenance.

"Hello!" he challenged.

Kenneth laid the book face down on his knee and smiled politely.

"How do you do?" he responded.

The newcomer dragged a big valise into the room and closed the door behind him, never for an instant taking his gaze off of Kenneth. Then, apparently concluding that the figure in the arm chair was real flesh and blood and not a creature of the imagination, he tossed his cap to the table, revealing a rumpled mass of golden yellow hair, and looked belligerently at the intruder.

"Say, you've got the wrong room, I guess," he announced.

"Here 's where they put me," answered Kenneth gravely.

"Well, you can't stay here," was the inhospitable response. "This is my room."

Kenneth merely looked respectfully interested. Joe Brewster slid out of his ulster, frowning angrily.

"You're a new boy, are n't you?" he demanded.

"About an hour and a half old," said Kenneth. Somehow the reply seemed to annoy Joe. He stepped toward the other truculently.

"Well, you go and see the Matron; she'll find a room for you; there are lots of rooms, I guess. Anyway, I'm not going to have you butting in here."

"You must be Joseph Brewster," said Kenneth. The other boy growled assent. "The fact is, Brewster, they put me in here with you because you are such a fine character. Dr. Whatshisname said you were the pride of the school, or something like that. I guess they thought association with you would benefit me."

Joe gave a roar and a rush. Over went the arm chair, over went Kenneth, over went Joe, and for a minute nothing was heard in

Number 12 but the sound of panting and gasping and muttered words, and the colliding of feet and bodies with floor and furniture. The attack had been somewhat unexpected and as a result, for the first moments of the battle, Kenneth occupied the uncomfortable and inglorious position of the under dog. He strove only to escape punishment, avoiding offensive tactics altogether. It was hard work, however, for Brewster pummelled

were turned. Now it was Kenneth who was on top, and it took him but a moment to seize Joe's wrists in a very firm grasp, a grasp which, in spite of all efforts, Joe found it impossible to escape. Kenneth, perched upon his stomach,—uneasily, you may be sure, since Joe heaved and tossed like a boat in a tempest,—offered terms.

"Had enough?" he asked.

"No," growled Joe.



"'AND WHO THE DICKENS ARE YOU, KID?' SAID THE NEW ARRIVAL."

like a good one, his seraphic face aflame with the light of battle and his yellow hair seeming to stand about his head like a golden oriflamme. And while Kenneth hugged his adversary to him, ducking his head away from the incessant jabs of a very industrious fist, he realized that he had made a mistake in his estimation of his future room-mate. He was going to like him; he was quite sure he was; providing, of course that said room-mate left enough of him! And then, seeing, or rather feeling his chance, he toppled Joe Brewster over his shoulder and in a trice the tables

"Then you 'll stay here until you have," answered Kenneth. "You and I are going to be room-mates, so we might as well get used to each other now as later, eh? How any fellow with a face like a little pink angel can use his fists the way you can, gets me!"

Kenneth was almost unseated at this juncture, but managed to hold his place. Panting from the effects of the struggle, he went on:

"Seems to me Dr. Randall must be mistaken in you, Brewster. You don't strike me at all as a model of deportment. Seems to

me he and you fixed up a pretty lively welcome for me, eh?"

The anger faded out of Joe's face and a smile trembled at the corners of his mouth.

"Let me up," he said quietly.

"Behave?"

"Yep."

"All right," said Kenneth. But before he could struggle to his feet there was a peremptory knock on the door, followed instantly by the appearance of a third person on the scene, a dark-haired, fallow, tall youth of fifteen who viewed the scene with surprise.

"What's up?" he asked.

Kenneth sprang to his feet and gave his hand to Joe. About them spread devastation.

"I was showing him a new tackle," explained Kenneth easily.

Joe, somewhat red of face, shot him a look of gratitude.

"Oh," said the new arrival, "and who the dickens are you, kid?"

"My name's Garwood. I just came today. I'm to room with Brewster."

"Is that right?" asked the other, turning to Joe. Joe nodded.

"So he says, Graft. I think it's mighty mean, though. They let me have a room to myself all Fall, and now, just when I'm getting used to it, they dump this chap in here. It is n't as though there were n't plenty of other rooms!"

"Why don't you kick to the Doctor?" asked Grafton Hyde.

"Oh, it would n't do any good, I suppose," said Joe.

Grafton Hyde sat down and viewed Kenneth with frank curiosity.

"Where are you from?" he demanded.

"Cleveland, Ohio."

"Any relation to John Garwood, the railroad man?"

"Ye—es, some," said Kenneth. Grafton snorted.

"Huh! I dare say! Most everyone tries to claim relationship with a millionaire. Bet you, he does n't know you're alive!"

"Well," answered Kenneth with some confusion, "maybe not, but—I think he's related to our family, just the same."

"You do, eh?" responded Grafton sarcastically. "Well, I would n't try very hard to claim relationship if I were you. I guess if the honest truth were known there are n't very many fellows who would want to be in John Garwood's shoes, for all his money."

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"Why?" asked Kenneth.

"Because he's no good. Look at the way he treated his employees in that last strike! Some of 'em nearly starved to death!"

"That's a — that is n't so!" answered Kenneth hotly. "It was all newspaper lies."

"Newspapers don't lie," said Grafton sententiously.

"They lied then, like anything," was the reply.

"Well, everyone knows what John Garwood is," said Grafton carelessly. "I've heard my father tell about him time and again. He used to know him years ago."

Kenneth opened his lips, thought better of it and kept silence.

"Ever hear of my father?" asked Grafton with a little swagger.

"What's his name?" asked Kenneth.

"Peter Hyde," answered the other importantly.

"Oh, yes! He's a big politician in Chicago, is n't he?"

"No, he is n't!" replied Grafton angrily. "He's Peter Hyde, the lumber magnate."

"Oh!" said Kenneth. "What—what's a lumber magnet?"

"Magnate, not magnet!" growled Grafton. "It's time you came to school if you don't know English. Where have you been going?"

"I beg pardon?"

"What school have you been to? My, you're a dummy!"

"I have n't been to any school this year. Last year I went to the grammar school at home."

"Then this is your first boarding school, eh?"

"Yes; and I hope I'll like it. The catalogue said it was a very fine school. I trust I shall profit from my connection with it."

Grafton stared bewilderedly, but the new junior's face was as innocent as a cherub's. Joe Brewster stared, too, for a moment; then a smile flickered around his mouth and he bent his head, finding interest in a bleeding knuckle.

"Well, I came over to talk about the team, Joe," Grafton said after a moment. "I did n't know you had company."

"Did n't know it myself," muttered Joe.

Kenneth picked up his book again and went back to his reading. But he was not so deeply immersed but that he caught now and then fragments of the conversation, from which he gathered that both Joe and Hyde were members of the Lower House Basket-

Ball Team, that Hyde held a very excellent opinion of his own abilities as a player, that Upper House was going to have a very strong team and that if Lower did n't find a fellow who could throw goals from fouls better than Simms could it was all up with them. Suddenly Kenneth laid down his book again.

"I say, you fellows, could n't I try for that team?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, you can *try*," laughed Grafton. "Ever play any?"

"A little. We had a team at the grammar school. I played right guard."

"You did, eh? That 's where I play," said Grafton, "Maybe you 'd like my place?"

"Don't you want it?" asked Kenneth innocently.

"Don't I want it! Well, you 'll have to work pretty hard to get it!"

"I will," said Kenneth very simply. Grafton stared doubtfully.

"Candidates are called for four o'clock tomorrow afternoon," said Joe. "You 'd better come along. You 're pretty light, but Jim Marble will give you a try all right."

"Thanks," answered Kenneth. "But would practice be likely to interfere with my studies?"

"Say, kid, you 're a wonder!" sneered Grafton as he got up to go. "I never saw anything so freshly green in my life! You 're going to have a real nice time here at Hilltop; I can see that. Well, see you later, Joe. Come up to-night; I want to show you some new snowshoes I brought back. Farewell, Garwood. By the way, what 's your first name?"

"Kenneth."

"Hey?"

"Kenneth; K,e,n,n,e,h—"

"Say, that 's a peach!" laughed Grafton. "Well, bring little Kenneth with you, Joe; I 've got some picture books."

"Thank you," said the new junior gratefully.

"Oh, don't mention it!" And Grafton went out chuckling.

As the door closed behind him, Joe Brewster sank into a chair and thrust out his legs, hands in pockets, while a radiant grin slowly overspread his angelic countenance.

"Well," he said finally, "you 're the first fellow that ever bluffed Graft! And the way he took it!"

Kenneth smiled modestly under the admiring regard of his room-mate.

"Gee!" cried Joe, glancing at his watch.

"It 's after six. Come on to supper. Maybe if we hurry they 'll give you a place at our table."

Kenneth picked up his cap and followed his new friend down the stairs. On the way he asked:

"Is that chap Hyde a particular friend of yours?"

"N-no," answered Joe, "not exactly. We 're on the team together, and he is n't such a bad sort. Only—he 's the richest fellow in school and he can't forget it!"

"I don't like him," said Kenneth decidedly.

Hilltop School stands on the top of a hill overlooking the Connecticut Valley, a cluster of half a dozen ivy-draped buildings of which only one, the new gymnasium, looks less than a hundred years old. Seventy-six feet by forty it is, built of red sandstone with freestone trimming; a fine, aristocratic looking structure which lends quite an air to the old campus. In the basement there is a roomy baseball cage, a bowling-alley, lockers and baths. In the main hall, one end of which terminates in a fair-sized stage, are gymnastic apparatus of all kinds.

It was here that Kenneth found himself at four o'clock the next day. His trunk had arrived and he had dug out his old basketball costume, a blue sleeveless shirt, white knee-pants and canvas shoes. He wore them now as he sat, a lithe, graceful figure on the edge of the stage. There were nearly thirty other fellows on the floor amusing themselves in various ways while they waited for the captain to arrive. Several of them Kenneth already knew well enough to speak to and many others he knew by name. For Joe had made himself Kenneth's guide and mentor, had shown him all there was to be seen, had introduced him to a number of the fellows and pointed out others and had initiated him into many of the school manners and methods. This morning Kenneth had made his appearance in various class-rooms and had met various teachers, among them Mr. Whipple, who, Kenneth discovered, was instructor in English. The fellows seemed a friendly lot and he was already growing to like Hilltop.

Naturally enough, Kenneth found himself the object of much interest. He was a new boy, the only new one in school. At Hilltop the athletic rivalry was principally internal, between dormitory and dormitory. To be sure the base-ball and foot-ball teams played other schools, but nevertheless the contests which wrought the fellows up to the highest

pitch of enthusiasm were those in which the Crimson of Upper House and the Blue of Lower met in battle. Each dormitory had its own foot-ball, base-ball, hockey, tennis, track, basket-ball, and debating, team, and rivalry was always intense. Hence the arrival of a new boy in Lower House meant a good deal to both camps. And most fellows liked what they saw of Kenneth, even while regretting that he was n't old enough and big enough for foot-ball material. Kenneth bore the scrutiny without embarrassment, but nevertheless he was glad when Joe joined him where he sat on the edge of the stage.

"Jim has n't come yet," said Joe, examining a big black-and-blue spot on his left knee. "I guess there won't be time for much practice to-day, because Upper has the floor at five. They're going to have a dandy team this year; a whole bunch of big fellows. But they had a big heavy team year before last and we beat them the first two games."

"Don't you play any outside schools?"

"No, the faculty won't let us. Perfect rot, is n't it? They let us play outsiders at foot-ball and base-ball and all that, but they won't let us take on even the grammar school for basket-ball. Randy says the game is too rough and we might get injured. Rough! I'd like to know what he calls foot-ball!"

"I don't understand about the classes here," said Kenneth. "I heard that big chap over there say he could n't play because he was 'advanced' or something. What's that?"

"Advanced senior," answered Joe. "You see, there's the preparatory class, the junior class, the middle class and the senior class. Then if a fellow wants to fit for college, he does another year in the senior class and in order to distinguish him from the fourth year fellows they call him an advanced senior. See? There are five in school this year. Faculty won't let them play basket-ball or foot-ball because they're supposed to be too big and might hurt some of us little chaps. Huh! Hello, there's Jim. I've got to see him a minute."

And Joe slipped off the stage and scurried across to where a boy of about sixteen, a tall, athletic-looking youth with reddish-brown hair was crossing the floor with a ball under each arm. Joe stopped him and said a few words and presently they both walked over to where Kenneth sat. Joe introduced the captain and the new candidate.

"Joe says you've played the game," said Jim inquiringly in a pleasant voice as he shook hands. Kenneth was somewhat awed by him and replied quite modestly:

"Yes, but I don't suppose I can play with you fellows. Still, I'd like to try."

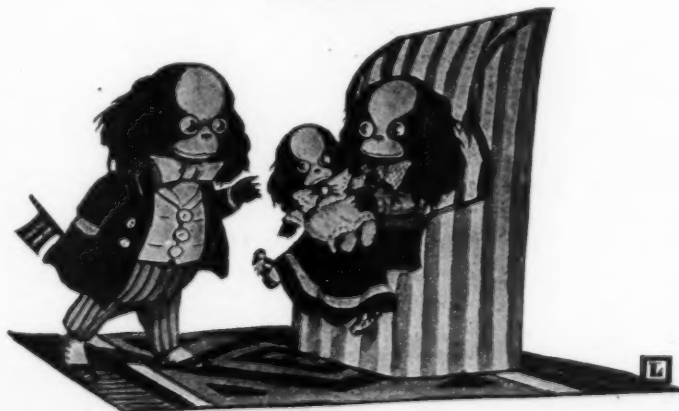
"That's right."

"How are you on throwing baskets?"

"Well, I used to be pretty fair last year."

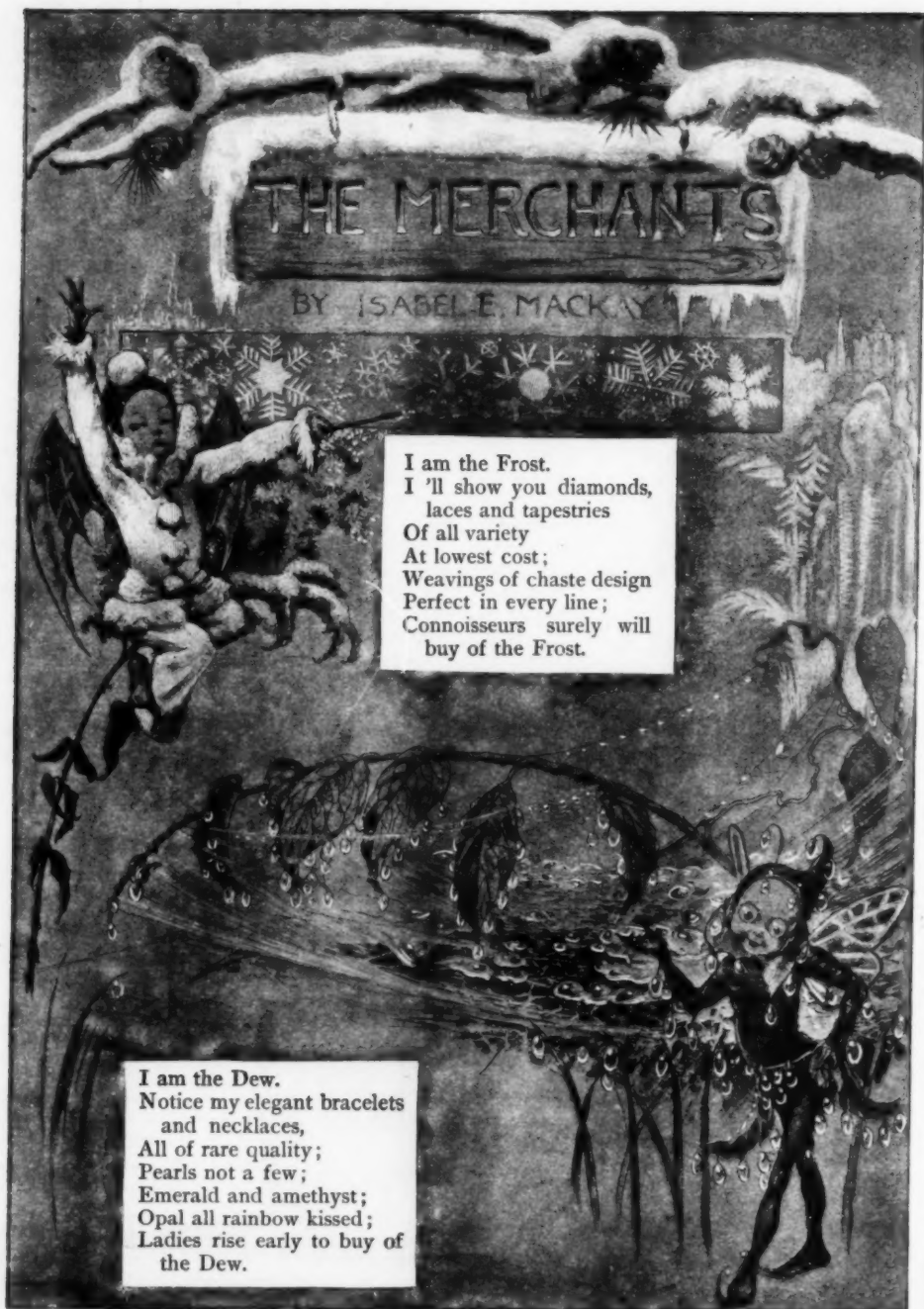
"Good enough. If you can throw goals well, you'll stand a good show of making the team as a substitute. You'd better get out there with the others and warm up."

(To be continued.)



VISITOR.—"Have you ever had the little darling's picture taken?"

THE MOTHER.—"Only a dog-uerreotype, that's all."



THE MERCHANTS

BY ISABELLE MACKAY

I am the Frost.
I 'll show you diamonds,
laces and tapestries
Of all variety
At lowest cost ;
Weavings of chaste design
Perfect in every line ;
Connoisseurs surely will
buy of the Frost.

I am the Dew.
Notice my elegant bracelets
and necklaces,
All of rare quality ;
Pearls not a few ;
Emerald and amethyst ;
Opal all rainbow kissed ;
Ladies rise early to buy of
the Dew.



Albertine
Ransell
Whelan

I am the Snow.
Let me display for you carpets
most exquisite.
Choicest of bordering
Also I show,
Heavy and soft and white,
Spread in a single night;
Folk who have wisdom will buy
of the Snow.

I am the Rain.
Something I'll show you
priceless and wonderful,
Making these offers seem
Tawdry and vain!
'Tis but a cloak of gray
Wrapping the world away—
Happy the few who will buy
of the Rain.

Pinkey Perkins: Just a Boy

By Captain Harold Hammond, U. S. A.

Illustrated by George Varian

HOW THE COASTING PARTY ENDED

ONE day after winter had set in and there was enough snow on the ground to make good sleighing, Putty Black and Eddie were standing on the court-house corner, sleds in hand, waiting for a chance to "hitch on" to some big sled, or sleigh, when the sound of merriment broke upon their ears from behind. Turning around to see what all the hilarity was about, they saw what to Eddie at least, was anything but an agreeable sight.

Pinkey had hitched the old family mare to his new hand sled, which was larger than most sleds of its kind and a product of Liberty Jim's most faithful efforts, and behind him was a long line of sleds, two behind the other, on each of which rode one or more boys or girls. Behind Pinkey, sharing the new sled, was Harriet Warren, while with Bunny Morris, whose sled occupied the very desirable position at the end of the line, rode Bess Knapp.

As the jolly party turned the corner, the sleigh-bells jingling merrily, and went gaily on their way, Eddie said to his companion in a tone that bore evidences of envy:

"They think they 're having a lot o' fun, don't they, Putty? I wish they 'd upset in a snow-drift somewhere." Then to change the subject as though he did not feel at all envious, he continued:

"Say, let's hook on that bob-sled coming up the road and ride out to Horney's hill where there's a crowd, and have a coast; that man driving lives out beyond there."

Horney's hill was over two miles away, too long a distance to walk on a cold winter's day unless it were impossible to ride, but there of all places could be found the best coasting anywhere in the vicinity of Enterprise.

Putty agreed instantly with Eddie's suggestion, and together they ran out into the road and slipped the rope of Eddie's sled under the iron rod which ran across the end of the wagon bed, in such a way that

they could part company with the big sled at any time merely by letting go the end of the rope. Then both jumped on the one sled, Eddie retaining hold of the rope, while Putty pulled his empty sled behind.

"I 'd rather do this any day than ride around behind an old plug like the one Pinkey Perkins is driving," said Eddie, gaily, but *he* knew and *Putty* knew that he would have given a good deal to be in Pinkey's party.

As they crossed the railroad tracks and neared the limits of the town, Putty looked back down the long snow-lined street.

"Here they come now, Eddie," said he, "I 'll bet they 're heading for Horney's hill too."

Eddie looked back and sure enough, not very far behind them came "Old Polly," trotting contentedly along, and behind her, almost hidden from view, trailed the long line of sleds she was pulling.

"Hoo-e-e-e," yelled Putty, by way of salutation, waving his cap. Putty wanted to be friendly with both Pinkey and Eddie, and now being with one, he wished to let the other know that as far as he himself was concerned, there was no cause for ill-feeling.

Putty's shout gave the farmer his first intimation that he had passengers, and not being in sympathy with granting free rides to town boys he proceeded at once to rid himself of them. Whipping up his horses quickly, he turned out into the deep snow at the side of the road and before the boys realized what was happening they were ploughing through the deep drifts at a terrific rate.

"Let go the rope, Eddie! Let her go!" shouted Putty, as the sled took a sharp plunge into a ditch and nearly capsized.

"It won't let go," replied Eddie in dismay, his eyes and mouth full of snow, "it's caught," and again came a deluge which found its way up their sleeves and down their necks in most uncomfortable fashion.

Putty had let go his sled as soon as the farmer had turned out from the main track and now he suffered additional loss by his cap falling off in the whirling mass behind them. Realizing that there was nothing to be gained by remaining longer where he was, he released his grip and as the sled careened

enormous snow-drift, into which he sank almost entirely from view.

Luckily, the bump against the stump broke the rope and the sled stopped short, upside down, where it landed a few feet beyond Eddie.

Needless to say, all this caused considerable excitement and amusement among those who were riding behind Old Polly, and Pinkey urged her to a still faster pace in order to be of assistance in case either Putty or Eddie had been injured in any way.

But the snow was soft, and beyond the discomfort caused by their being thus violently hurled into it, neither was any the worse for his experience.

By the time Eddie, much resembling a snow man, had extricated himself from his undignified position in the snow-drift and had partially brushed himself off, Putty joined him and as Pinkey and his party drew near, the two stood shivering at the side of the road, the picture of despair. Both were angry and in no mood to accept sympathy, for they realized what an amusing sight it must have been for the others to see them on



"EDDIE SHOT INTO THE AIR LIKE A PROJECTILE."

over on one runner again, threw himself into the deep snow at the side of the road.

Eddie still held on, not willing to lose his sled in this inglorious fashion, but only for a minute longer. Putty had no more than picked himself up and was brushing the snow from his clothes when the sled struck a stump which was buried beneath the snow, and turned completely over. Eddie shot into the air like a projectile, executing a partial somersault, and landed head first in an

their wild ride, and how ludicrous they must have looked plunging helplessly into the snow-drifts. Furthermore, Eddie felt it all the more keenly that Pinkey and Harriet should have been among those who had witnessed their undoing.

Pinkey, however, bore no malice toward Eddie now, for it was impossible for him to cherish such feelings long toward anyone and since the night of the church fair he had studiously refrained from doing anything or

saying anything that might make it appear that he was gloating over his victory.

As Old Polly came opposite Eddie and Putty, Pinkey drew rain on her and said:

"If you fellows are going out to Horney's hill, hook on behind and I'll give you a ride."

Putty was evidently most willing to accept the invitation and started with his sled for the middle of the road, but not so Eddie. He jerked the rope from Putty's hand, for fear he would join Pinkey's party, and said savagely:

"When I want a ride, I'll say so. I'd rather walk than ride behind that old plug."

"It does look as if you'd rather ride faster than we go," answered Pinkey, angered that his offer should be so flatly refused, "and besides you like to take a dive into the snowdrifts now and then; so dive ahead, I don't care. Get up, Polly," and in another minute the merry party was gliding smoothly down the road toward the old mill which stood at the cross-roads. Here they turned and were soon lost to view.

"Gee, I'd like to snowball 'em, would n't you, Putty," said Eddie, with a decided tone of jealousy in his voice. "Pinkey Perkins thinks he's the whole show, riding around with that new sled of his."

"T would be fun to hide somewhere and pelt 'em well," agreed Putty, rather weakly. He regretted that Eddie had refused to ride and his tone lacked enthusiasm.

"Let's cut through the fields and beat 'em to the hill, anyway," said Eddie, and with Putty's assistance he lifted his own large sled and Putty's lighter one over the fence and the pair started through the snow for the hill.

When Pinkey and those with him reached the hill, they found a large crowd there enjoying the coasting on the well-packed hillside. Eddie and Putty had arrived before them, but neither came anywhere near those with whom they had declined to ride. They kept to a different part of the hill and gave no sign of any ill feeling toward those who had come with Pinkey.

Pinkey's new sled proved to be a wonder as a coaster.

"I tell you what, Bunny," he said, "if anybody can beat Liberty Jim at making sleds I'd like to see 'em do it. Did you see us break the record just now?"

"Yes, and I saw Ed and Putty and some others breaking records just now, too," replied Bunny, "makin' for the road as fast as

they could go. We'd better go and see if they took Old Polly away and left us to walk home."

"I'd just like to see 'em take her away," said Pinkey, much disturbed at the thought even; "it would be the last time any of them would ever take anything of mine."

Pinkey and Bunny ran to a point whence they could see the gate where they had tied Old Polly. They were gratified to see that she was standing there just as they had left her, and that Eddie and Putty and "Shiner" Brayley, whose father owned the old mill, and three other boys were already some distance away, bound in the direction of the cross-roads.

"I guess it's time we were skipping, too," said Pinkey regretfully, after all had enjoyed a few more rides down the enticing slope, "because I've got my Sunday wood to get in before dark."

The others agreed with Pinkey, though all were loth to depart from the pleasure they were enjoying. They pulled their sleds out to the gate, attached them to the harness on Old Polly and set out for Enterprise. It had begun to grow dusk by the time they got well started and Pinkey urged the old mare into a faster pace than usual, so they went gliding down the road at a rate that insured their reaching home in good time.

Meanwhile, Eddie and those who had so suddenly left the hill with him, instead of going home as they had pretended, were intent on a deeply laid scheme to carry out Eddie's idea of snowballing Pinkey's party, and to do it on their way home. Shiner had been persuaded into getting the key to the old mill, without permission of course, and it was from there that the attack was to be made.

The mill, being operated by water power, could not run during the winter months as the stream which furnished the power was frozen up, and Shiner's father was always most careful to board up the doors and windows on the first floor until Spring should come and he could set the machinery in motion again. The mill represented all his worldly possessions and he took no chances against intrusion by anyone.

"Let 'em come on now, we'll give 'em plenty of fun," said Eddie, when, after the door had been unlocked, he and the others had succeeded in making and bringing inside a huge quantity of snowballs and arranging them handily in rows in the upper windows.

"I 'd laugh if the old mare ran off and took 'em through the deep snow, just to let 'em see how it goes," said Putty, trying to work up an air of enthusiasm that he did not feel.

"We 'll even up a little for that snipe-

fore Pinkey whips up and they get away from us."

"Ed and I will soak it to Pinkey and the old mare," decreed Putty, "and the rest of you look out for the others. Don't hit any of the girls though, if you can help it."

Although Bess Knapp was riding with Bunny, Putty still held her in high regard.

By this time the long line of sleds, with Pinkey's in the lead, had almost reached the mill and before anyone dreamed of any danger a volley of well-made and accurately aimed snowballs came pelting down upon them, followed immediately by a second.

Eddie's aim was accurate, his first shot striking Old Polly on the hip and his second passing between Pinkey and Harriet, just barely grazing Pinkey's cap. Bunny fared worse than anyone else, receiving the full effect of a carefully rounded, well packed, snowball which struck him fairly in the cheek and sent him sprawling in the snow at the side of the road. Some of the others were struck, while a few, like Pinkey, escaped uninjured by the first two volleys.

If Eddie expected Pinkey to whip up his horse and run away from the fight, he was much mistaken. No sooner had he taken in the situation than he drew rein on Old Polly, who had not acted as wildly as Putty had hoped, and after stopping her completely, turned to Harriet.

"You hold the lines, please," he said, passing her the reins, "while we tackle those fellows," and with that he jumped from the



"PINKEY WAS STRUGGLING TO CLOSE THE LARGE OAK DOOR."

hunting trick down in the river bottom, too," chimed in Shiner, who still had to suffer the taunts of everyone about how he and the others had been fooled on that occasion.

"Here they come!" cried Eddie, gleefully, without taking his eye from the knot hole through which he was watching the road without being seen. "Now everybody get ready and let 'em have it good and hard be-

sled just in time to receive a stinging blow on the elbow which made him hop around for a moment.

"Come on, fellows," he shouted, taking off his mittens, "don't sit there and make targets of yourselves. Bunny, you come over here with me and we'll keep 'em away from the windows as well as we can while Joe and "Shorty" and the others make up a lot of snowballs, and then we'll charge 'em."

When a goodly number of snowballs had been made and Pinkey was about ready to

advance. Shiner, who realized more than the others that to be locked up in the mill meant no chance of escape, save by a dangerous jump from an upper window, left his place as soon as Pinkey started, intending if possible to reach the door before Pinkey should.

It was an exciting time, Bunny, Joe and Shorty in the road pelting those upstairs with snowballs, Pinkey struggling to close the large oak door, all the time being showered with projectiles by those above, who now turned all their attention to him, and Shiner

racing madly down the stairs three steps at a time and through the mill, trying to defeat Pinkey's endeavor to make prisoners of all of them.

Just as Pinkey turned the key in the rusty lock and the bolt shot into place, Shiner threw his whole weight against the door on the inside, but he was too late.

Those above looked on in dumb surprise. Their ammunition was exhausted now and it was no longer necessary to keep them from the windows. They realized, too, that as the sides of the mill were one glare of ice from a recent sleet storm, it would be impossible to "shin" down the posts to the ground.

Their anxious faces became the pictures of dismay as they realised that they were beaten and they saw Pinkey running proudly back to his sled, swinging the key over his head in high glee over the success of his strategy.

"Let me out!" shrieked Shiner, beating against the door with his fists, "bring that key back here and let me out! We can't get out unless we have that key," and again he set up a vigorous shaking on the door.

"That 's the reason I took it," taunted Pinkey. "Stay in there and snow-ball everybody that goes by. They can't get at you."



"'MR. BRAYLEY,' SAID PINKEY, 'HERE IS THE KEY OF YOUR MILL.'"

order an advance, with the intention of rushing into the mill and engaging the enemy at close quarters, he noticed the big key in the door and another idea at once struck him as being a surer way to victory and one entailing much less danger.

"Here, you fellers," he shouted eagerly, "take these snow-balls and keep it up hot and heavy while I lock 'em in," and he rushed madly for the heavy door which stood partially open.

Those in the mill heard Pinkey's remark and at once directed a vigorous bombardment toward him alone, endeavoring to check his

"We 've got to get home," shouted Putty from the upper window.

"So have we," answered Pinkey, preparing to resume his seat on the sled.

"You started home long before we did," chimed in Bunny, eager to have a say in the matter. "Why did n't you go?"

"Aw, come on now, let us out! We won't snowball you any more," promised Putty.

"Good reason why," answered Joe. "It is n't very snowy up there, is it?"

"Come on fellers," said Pinkey with a satisfied air, taking the reins from Harriet. "We 've got to be going; it's getting darker every minute."

"Just you wait till I catch you out!" shouted Eddie, as the party drove off, "and you 'll pay for this."

"All right," shouted Pinkey, without turning his head, "I 'll wait. I 'm out now, but it will be some time before anybody catches you out."

"Hook on behind and we 'll give you a ride!" shouted Bunny, but they were too far away now for their remarks to be heard.

"You won't keep them there all night will you, Pinkey?" inquired Harriet when they had left the mill far behind. "They 'll be terribly cold pretty soon and nobody will know where they are."

"No, I 'll send the key back by somebody and they can let 'em out. But I 'll give 'em a good scare and teach 'em a lesson first."

Pinkey knew that they would soon meet some farmer and then he would give him the key and ask him to liberate the prisoners.

Not until they had reached the edge of town, however, did they meet anyone at all and then in the growing darkness Pinkey recognized Shiner's father driving slowly homeward in a large bob-sled.

Pinkey did not wish to appear in the rôle of an informer, yet he realized that this might be his only chance to liberate his enemies, so he stopped and got off his sled.

"Mr. Brayley," he said, when the farmer had noticed him and stopped his team. "Here 's the key to your mill. There are some boys in there who want to get out."

"Humph! What?" exclaimed Mr. Brayley, excitedly, unable to understand Pinkey's meaning. "Boys in my mill? Have you been in my mill? Why, I 'll tan every last one of you. What 've you been doing in my mill?"

"We have n't been in your mill," replied Pinkey. "You 'll find all that have been there are in there yet."

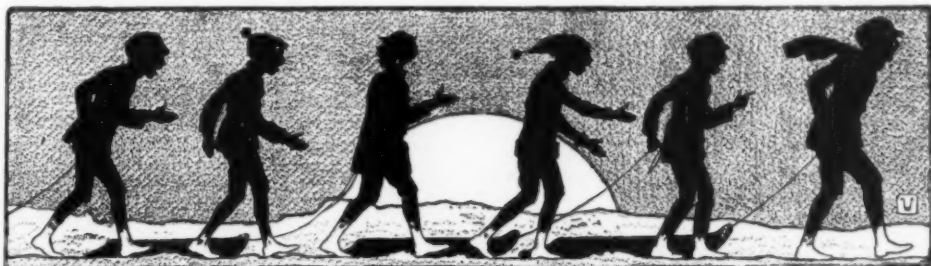
Mr. Brayley was too excited to inquire further into the matter and reached for the key with one hand while he started up his horses with the other. As he drove off, Pinkey could hear him saying to himself in a tone that boded ill for somebody:

"Boys in my mill! I 'll teach 'em. Why, the idea! Boys in my mill!!"

Mr. Brayley lost no time in reaching the mill and unlocking the door. There he found six of the most penitent and thoroughly frightened boys it would have been possible to find. Only by making all kinds of threats had Shiner been able to prevent his companions from breaking off one of the wooden shutters that barred the windows, in order to make their escape. He knew that his father would miss the key when he got home and that he would come to the mill at once, so he did not wish that his anger should be increased by finding anything broken. He saw trouble enough ahead as it was.

And he was right. Mr. Brayley dispensed justice as he saw it from his point of view and spared no one, though it seemed to Shiner that he got more than his share, considering that he did not originate the idea.

Pinkey and his friends reached Enterprise without further interruption but it was not until darkness had long settled upon the town that the other little band crossed the railroad tracks on foot and dispersed, dejected over the sad failure of their afternoon's adventure.



Why?

By John Kendrick Bangs

A PISTOLET 's a little pistol;
An armlet is a little arm;
A fortlet is a little fortress
To keep the people safe from harm.

A rivulet 's a little river;
A rillet is a little rill;
If there were such a word as pillet
'T would doubtless mean a little pill.

But here comes in a vexing problem
And gives our English tongue a rub—
Why are not triplets little journeys,
A doublet just a little dub?

If there were such a word as soblets
'T would mean of course just little sobs;

Which, being so, will some one tell me
Why are not goblets little gobs?

Why are not little walls called wallets,
And bullets little pigmy bulls?
And why are pullets little chickens
Instead of tiny little pulls?

These are the points I find vexatious
In this old tongue our fathers vaunt.
I 've bothered so I 'm getting gauntlet—
That is to say, a little gaunt.

To older heads it may be easy,
But as for me it makes me ill,
At least until I get a skillet—
If skillet means a little skill.



NOT AFRAID OF WORK.

SMALL BOY.—"Want your walk shoveled off, lady? Me an' me brudder 'll do it for a dime."

A Cousin-Hunt

By E. Vinton Blake

With Illustrations by J. A. Cahill

A BAREFOOTED boy ran down the farm-slope, calling vociferously to Colonel Brent, riding by with his New York friend behind his gray pacer. The colonel pulled up.

"Hallo, Jimmy,—what do you want?"

"Want to say good-by, colonel,—we 're going!"

"You are n't now? Really! sold the farm, have you?"

"No, but it 's advertised, and father 's got an opening, an' we 're goin' tomorrow! Everything 's packed an' sent."

"And you 're glad?"

"Yes, *sir*,—all of us! Farm 's too dead; we want to get where we can see folks! I 'm goin' to earn money, an' rise in the world!"

"After you get your learning," laughed the colonel. "Well, my opinion is, you 'll be sick enough of the crowded city before the summer 's out. I 'll run in coming back,—got to catch the train now."

He drove rapidly on.

"Those folks don't know how well off they are," he remarked to his New York friend. "They hanker for what they have n't got. They 're going to the city to leave all that,"—he waved his whip back at the rambling brown farm-house nestled in the trees that crowned the knoll. "There 's thirty acres and they raise fruit and vegetables, and sell 'em right in town. They 're smart,—maybe they 'll do well,—but I think they miss it!"

"It 's hard to tell," thoughtfully said the New York man. "Now I hanker for what I have n't got. I 've been in the drive all my life and I 'm tired of it, I can tell you. I 'd like some sort of a home-place, where I could go every year for peace and rest."

"You might change with these folks here," laughed the colonel, "then you 'd both be suited. Seriously, though,—why could n't you buy it? I should see more of you, and we 'd go shooting together in the fall. Come on!"

The city man sat silent some minutes, then he turned to his companion, laughing.

"I was thinking of that Christmas at Asher Damon's," he remarked. The colonel ha-ha-ed aloud. He knew the whole story of his friend's curious adventure of two years before.

"The cheek of you!" he exclaimed.

"Country air certainly inspired that prank. But what has this farm to do with that?"

"Nothing,—it only put me in mind of a resolution I made at Asher Damon's to look up those unknown cousins of mine in Hartford. I 'm a lonely sort of man," he hesitated, not being given to confidences. "I shall never be nearer to them than now.—When does the Hartford train leave?"

"Why—that 's the other way," said the colonel, puzzled. "Then you won't go to New York after all?"

"No."

The colonel looked at his watch. "Great Scott, we 've just five minutes to make it! It comes before the New York train." He slapped the reins on the gray pacer's back, and next minute they were flying.

"Good horse!" said the city man, holding his hat.

"Yes," said the colonel. "But—well, your changes of mind are lightning changes! Wish you 'd give me some warning of your next one, so that I can keep up with you!"

"Here 't is," answered the city man, "if I want that farm, I 'll telephone, and you can buy it for me. Thank goodness we 're in time—good-by!"

He seized his bag and ran as his friend called, "Say,—you 're not in earnest?" and the train came thundering in. The next minute the colonel, rather dazed, sat alone in the buggy, and the train slid smoothly away, down the long perspective of rails.

"Well, of all the sudden men!" he remarked to the gray pacer, "I think John James Alston takes the cake." And he slowly turned his horse toward home.

John James Alston, in the train, arranged his ideas. "Let 's see—he 's a Harbush; don't know his first name. Second cousin on mother's side. Wish I could get to know

them without being known myself, but it's not likely. They're city people, and won't take in a stranger as the Damons did." He smiled.

It was about ten o'clock when John James Alston walked into a Hartford drug store and consulted a directory. This informed

seventies, disapproving of the shabby tenement section, and feeling as if Fate had balked him.

At this moment some object shot down from an open upper window nearly above him; there was a splashing crash on the sidewalk at his feet. Lo! the fragments of

a saucer, and a pool of milk. John James made an involuntary halt. Alas and alas for his immaculate gray coat! Also came a voice from on high:

"There now, Merry Harbush, see what your old cat's done! Oh, goodness!"

The last ejaculation sounded in plainer, yet subdued accents, as the speaker put out her head, and took in the whole situation. John James glanced at the number: it was 89.

Directly came feet running down-stairs, and a young girl with a pleasant face and trim figure hurried out upon the walk.

"Oh, I do beg your pardon!" she began, and her speech was gentle and refined. "I am so very sorry! My brother was feeding his cat on the window-sill, and—won't you please come up-stairs, and let mother see if she can't clean that off your coat?"

"Certainly," said John James, with internal exultation that took no thought of his coat. "But don't take too much trouble,—it was an accident."

He noticed that the bare stairway was very clean. Things in the family living-room were worn and faded, but well kept. Several cheap reproductions of famous pictures decorated the walls; the big mahogany table,



"'I DO BEG YOUR PARDON,' SHE BEGAN."

him that a certain Andrew Harbush lived at number 41 Olive street.

At the Olive street house John James learned that the elusive Harbushes had moved, a month before, to sixty-something-or-other Levine street. And on Levine street, no Harbush had ever been heard of, through the whole range of sixties!

He loitered along the sidewalk past the

evidently an heirloom, held books and papers. All seemed neat and tidy, notably the pale woman who moved forward from the kitchen doorway to greet them with an anxious face.

"This is the gentleman, mother," said the girl.

"My name is James," said the intruder, taking off his hat.

"I'm Mrs. Harbush," she answered, "and I hope the milk has n't spoiled your coat?"

"I think not," he replied, looking down.

"If you could let me take it," she hesitated, "and slip on my husband's best coat,—he's about your size, I think,—I could clean this so much better."

This was as good as a play to John James, who retired to the bedroom, coming out in borrowed attire to sit with the family, while Mrs. Harbush attacked the stains.

Then he critically observed the frightened boy, who sat defiantly hugging an old, long-haired cat with a white frilled black head in the sofa-corner, and repulsed all his friendly advances. However, the boy's manner changed at his sister's quick reproof; evidently he clung to her with passionate affection.

"Judy said maybe father'd take her away after this,—she's always getting into scrapes," he vouchsafed at last, his voice breaking distressfully. "She was given to me, and she's all I've got; and I'm like—*this!*" He flung out one hand bitterly at his crutch, and his lame leg which had an iron frame on it. John James watched him with serious compassion.

"Merry is fond of pets," softly said the girl, Judith; "and there's no place for them here,—everything's so crowded. Sometimes the cat troubles the neighbors. Father has been so vexed!"

And John James with genuine sympathy, said, "It's too bad!"

The clock struck twelve. Judith hastily

passed to the kitchen, whence came the rattle of dishes and odor of food. John James looked oddly satisfied as he glanced at his coat, which quarreled violently with the rest of his suit.



"‘MERRY IS FOND OF PETS,’ SAID JUDITH.”

Presently masculine voices and footsteps in the kitchen announced newcomers. John James was dreadfully curious, but talked on with the boy, who, flushed and eager now, confided to the kindly gentleman the sad fate of his many pets. Only Vixen remained to him, and now,—his face changed as his father stood in the doorway.

John James Alston, rising, looked critically at his new-found cousin. Andrew Harbush was tall, thin, gray of hair and mustache, with a gentle discouragement of speech and manner that hinted at misfortune or hard times.

"I am sorry your clothing has suffered, Mr. James," he began, "and I think we shall have to do away with our mischievous cat,"—Merry gave a short, sharp cry, and crowded the cat hurriedly into the sofa-corner for protection; and John James earnestly interceded, representing Coats as of infinitely small consequence compared with Cats!

But Andrew Harbush's expression did not reassure his anxious boy.

Then the New York man said he was a stranger, and begged the favor of dinner

and a couple of nights' lodging. "My home is in a New York hotel," he added, "and sometimes I am very tired of it."

When John James unbent, he was irresistible. I think, too, since the Christmas episode of two years back, something warmer, more genial and human had got into his manner. Perhaps he had drawn nearer his fellow men.

Mr. Harbush and his wife glanced at each other at this unusual request, and John James, penetrating their possible distrust, laid a ten dollar bill in Andrew Harbush's hand.

"This for guarantee of my good faith," he said pleasantly.

"But this is too much, sir," remonstrated his host.

"Well, at the end of my stay, if there's any change you can hand it to me," said John James. "I want to taste real home cooking once more."

"Oh dear,—and I've only a parsnip stew and hasty pudding for dinner!" cried Mrs. Harbush in real dismay.

"I shall enjoy it," remarked John James with a bow: "my grandmother used to make them."

At table in the kitchen, he was introduced to the fifteen-year-old son Robert, a thin, pale lad, with an expression of chronic discontent.

"We 're crowded here," said Mr. Harbush as they sat down, "our rooms are very small, and I 'm afraid you 'll be sorry you stayed."

Things were "coming" to John James. The problem was here, and the solution was

in sight. If he could only make matters fit in, all would yet be well.

"Would n't you like to go to a place where you could have cats, puppies, hens, ducks, and wide green fields to roam about in?" asked John James smiling at Merry.



"JOHN JAMES WENT HOME TO HIS KINSFOLK LAST CHRISTMAS." (SEE PAGE 155.)

"Would n't I like to go—to heaven!" answered the boy sharply; and there were tears in his eyes.

"We 're not really cut out for city folks," said Andrew Harbush, "I was born in Langdale, Vermont. The older children can barely remember the country. We lived, too, in a better house, but we 've had sickness and hard luck."

"Would n't you get back if you could? Do you know anything of farming?" asked John James.

"Oh yes,—I used to be good at it. Sometimes I think I'll make a break for the country. This crowded place is not for children." And the father cast a thoughtful eye on his son Robert.

"The country 's a blessed relief after New York," said John James. "Do you know anybody down there?"

"No," slowly said Andrew Harbush. "A distant cousin of mother's is possibly somewhere there. His name is Alston. But I never knew him."

John James scrutinized Robert attentively. The discontented lad might prove an important factor in the problem he was trying to solve. He was pretty sure his cousin would welcome the idea of country living on Robert's account. The plan began to develop in his mind.

That afternoon Colonel Brent at the telephone heard a still small voice from Hartford. It said:

"Buy that farm for me!"

"That you, Alston? You're in earnest?"

"Sure. Pay what 's right. Any assets with the place?"

"Stock, do you mean? Yes, one cow, two pigs and some hens. But they're extra."

"Buy 'em. Also a good farm horse. Get plenty of feed, and oh, yes—have the house made ready for people to live in it."

"You don't mean furnished?"

"No, but curtain it, and carpet the front room. Oh—and get a good puppy—any breed."

"Great Scott!" mused Colonel Brent, hanging up the receiver, "he'll have a menagerie on his hands."

And he went out to see the agent.

That evening after supper, as they all sat round the front room lamp, Robert grew uneasy. John James understood that sundry whistles and cat-calls from without were meant for this young gentleman, and therefore directed to him much of his conversation.

It appeared that Robert was employed in the bundle department of a dry-goods store, and disliked his job.

"I'd rather it was a grocery," said Rob. "The work 's harder, but I should get about and see more. I do up bundles all day till I'm almost crazy."

"You'd like more out-of-doors—and out-door life, perhaps?" suggested John James.

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"Yes, I would—indeed I would!" said Robert with emphasis.

"You see," remarked the guest to Andrew Harbush, "all things work toward the 'break' you spoke of. The children will be your best helpers; cats, dogs and flowers are all thrown in,"—he smiled at Merry and Judith, then broke off. Robert had risen in response to an insistent whistle from without, and the faces of the father and mother at that moment showed where one of their worries lay. "I'll be back in a few minutes," said Robert to his mother, and avoided her eyes.

John James understood, and made a bold stroke.

"If you're not particularly engaged," he said to Rob, "I wish you would stay. I have a proposal to make that you'll like to hear." His own perfect courtesy compelled that of the lad, who hesitated, flattered and curious. "Oh,—all right," he said at last, and uttered a brief refusal from the window. As he shut it, there came up laughter and rude references to "mother's apron string." Robert sat down, flushed and uncomfortable, and there was a pause.

"I also came from Langdale, Vermont," observed John James to Andrew Harbush. He stopped; the other looked an inquiry.

"James—James. Let me see. In what part—"

"My family moved away when I was very young,—and that is not my whole name," added the New York man smiling. "I am John James Alston, and my mother, Marian Harbush, was second cousin to you. Shake hands again, Cousin Andrew!"

He tossed his card on the table, and Andrew Harbush rising up, shook his hand across it, a smile of welcome struggling through the utter astonishment on his face.

"Well, well, well! This beats the story books!" he said after a minute. "And how in the world did you find me?"

"Directory—people at the other house—and the cat!" humorously said John James. Merry gave a shout.

"The cat! There, you see, father, she's some good! Are you my cousin? Your name 's Alston? What shall I call you?" eagerly to John James.

"I shall be glad if you'll all call me just Cousin John," answered the gentleman. "And now this brings me right to the cause of my coming to see you."

He told the story of his Christmas visit to Asher Damon, and they listened with

laughter and sympathetic interest. "I think since then I have wanted my own people," concluded John James simply. "I too should like truly to 'come home for Christmas' to my kinsfolk. And now that I have come to know you, I want to make a proposal. It's a very odd and sudden one, no doubt; but you can take time to think it over. I came here to-day from Shadwell, forty miles away, where I visited an old friend. I have there a farm of thirty acres, at present unoccupied."

What Colonel Brent had told him, he now told his cousins, describing the farm as he saw it. He offered it to them for a year, rent free, while they "made a beginning"; and thereafter at a merely nominal rent, promising to come and spend Christmas, and board with them in summer. As he finished, the boy Merry, who, fascinated, had drawn nearer, clutched him by the shoulder and whispered brokenly, "Cousin John, I shall pray for it,—I shall pray hard, every time I wake up to-night."

The light of eager desire lit Judith's eyes, and Robert, with a face stirred to interest, sat silent, thinking.

After the first astonishment, they asked questions. As Andrew said, a whole family could not decide to pull up stakes and move in a minute; but at John James' proposal to take them to see for themselves, they buzzed like a hive of bees with excited expectation. Pleasure-starved for years, now opened before them a jaunt of forty miles to Shadwell, in the blooming weather of early June!

They went on Saturday morning: John James, Colonel Brent and the telephone arranging matters. That none of the family should be left behind, Judith carried the cat in a basket.

Robert, unknowing, stood where two roads meet; one led through the byways of a great city to the shadows of wrongdoing and unhappiness; the other through clear country sunlight to healthy labor and true manhood. But he only realized that he was pulled both ways by half-understood desires; that he liked his cousin John, felt great interest in the unknown farm and looked forward eagerly to the outing.

That trip was like a letting out of prison for them all. Oh, the green fields—the clear brown streams—the crowslips in the meadows! Mrs. Harbush in her worn black dress sat, happily silent, by her husband; Judith and Merry held each other's hands; Robert's face was aglow with eagerness and expectancy.

Colonel Brent met them at the station with his buggy and the carryall, and they rode away,—as it seemed, through sweet airs of Paradise, over green hill and vales, toward the home of their desire.

The farmhouse was only partially dismantled;—the colonel had met John James' instructions half-way. The windows were all curtained; pale yellow roses trailed lightly all over the parlor carpet. There was a



"JUDITH CRIED: 'OH, THE FLOWERS!'"

good range, a table and chairs in the kitchen (where a kindly caretaker waited to get them a good dinner), a couple of beds in the garret; and the bare rooms shone with cleanliness and sunlight.

But the out-of-doors,—the beautiful, far-reaching out-of-doors! How the hearts of these people, cramped, like their bodies, between dull walls of brick and mortar, expanded, exulting, in this fresh green freedom.

There was an old-fashioned garden. Judith cried, "Oh, the flowers!" and went to her knees trying to embrace the sweet pinks, the Canterbury bells, crimson phlox and white day-lilies. Tears actually dropped on the nodding blossoms as she kissed them with an aching delight at her heart. The child's inborn love of beauty had been unsatisfied all her life. Watching her, tears also stood in her mother's eyes.

The cow, the horse, pigs, hens and chicks, and—climax of all—the fat spaniel pup,—

never were commonplace farm animals so much admired!

Merry sat down, hugged the dog, and desired no more on earth. The others walked on through raspberry and blackberry rows to the strawberry acre, slowly reddening with the ripening fruit. Robert's face was full of strong interest,—he was evidently thinking hard. After dinner he and the colonel strayed away toward the woodland and disappeared. When they came back the boy's cheeks were flushed and his eyes eager.

"Father," he said, "colonel says there 's good shooting here in the fall,—and—he 's got a gun I can take,—and there 's a big creek, father, that bounds one corner of our woods,"—Merry punched Judy at the possessive pronoun,—“and he says there 's trout in it!”

A smile broke through the seriousness of Andrew Harbush's face.

"There 's also lots of work, son, all over this farm," he said soberly, waving his hand abroad. "If we come here, we shall tumble neck and crop into the hardest kind of a hustle,—with all this fruit coming on, ready for picking. And you never did a stroke of farm-work in your life."

"It 's out-doors instead of in," said Rob after a pause, "I must work anyway,—and I like it better here. Colonel says his boy works too."

"Sure he does," assented the colonel. "Work 's good for boys: and we 'll give you a new complexion in a fortnight, or I 'm mistaken. I guess you 'll cast in your lot with us, neighbor, after all 's said."

Indoors, Judith and her mother wandered again through the pleasant old rooms. "They could n't have left this carpet," mused Mrs. Harbush in the parlor. "It 's perfectly new. I suspect—"

"It 's sure to be Cousin John," said Judith. "We never had a brand-new carpet before, that I remember. Is n't this lovely! Mother,

we shall come, sha'n't we? Oh mother, it 's just like heaven here!"

Mrs. Harbush put her arm about her daughter, and they stood silently looking from the window. A golden oriole swung suddenly from the jasmine trellis, trilling to his mate. Judith's face was illumined.

"See!" she said softly. "He 's a living flame! All these things are separate pieces of a great—big—beautiful—Joy! I can't tell you, mother, how I felt when I saw those flowers!"

They found a box of bedclothes under the eaves,—very singular!—and they "camped down" that night in the old house, all save Rob and John James, who went home with the colonel. Father and mother talked softly nearly all night, doubly anxious, for the children's sake, to do what was wisest and best. And for the children's sake, they chose the life nearest to God and Nature.

Back to the city on Monday morning went only Andrew Harbush and his wife; the children, in charge of the friendly caretaker, remaining for their first taste of country life. And John James employed himself in getting a very lively hustle on some men who were putting up a windmill and a water-tank: a little convenience that had hitherto escaped him.

John James' cousin-hunt ended—to the vast satisfaction of the colonel and himself,—on the day of the family's final establishment at the farm. The colonel anticipated "great fun" in playing guardian angel to these helpless city folk, just returned to their original heritage, the soil; and he was astonished to find how much Andrew Harbush really knew about farming. Also, that with Merry's pups and coon-cats, Judy's fancy chicks and flowers, Robert's live-stock and cranberry bog, the young people contributed not a little toward making the whole venture a success.

And one thing is certain,—John James Alston went home to his kinfolk last Christmas,—and maybe he did n't enjoy it!



A Dolly Dialogue

By Carolyn Wells

(With apologies to Anthony Hope)

SCENE: THE NURSERY.

TIME: MIDNIGHT.

Characters.

THE BISQUE DOLL.

THE RUBBER DOLL.

THE RAG DOLL.

THE BROWNIE DOLL.

THE PAPER DOLL.

THE WAX DOLL.

THE CHINA DOLL.

THE WORSTED DOLL.

THE RUBBER DOLL. This night is very long and weary,

Excuse me if I stretch and yawn,—

THE RAG DOLL. I must confess I'm tired too, dearie,

And it is still some hours till dawn.

THE BISQUE DOLL. I'm rather glad of rest and quiet,

The nights are better than the days.

THE PAPER DOLL. Yes, for the nursery's in a riot,

And Polly tears me when she plays.

THE RUBBER DOLL. Don't say a word against our Polly,

I won't allow it! Do you hear?

THE PAPER DOLL. I did n't! I'm her favorite dolly.

THE RAG DOLL. (To herself.) She called *me* that! How very queer!

THE BISQUE DOLL. What utter nonsense you are talking,

Of course dear Polly loves *me* best,

She takes *me* when she goes out walking,—

THE CHINA DOLL. Oh, that's because you're finely dressed.

THE RUBBER DOLL. Yes, wait till you're a little older,—

THE PAPER DOLL. Till Polly gets you torn and soiled!

BISQUE



RUBBER



WORSTED



BROWNIE



WAX



RAG



PAPER

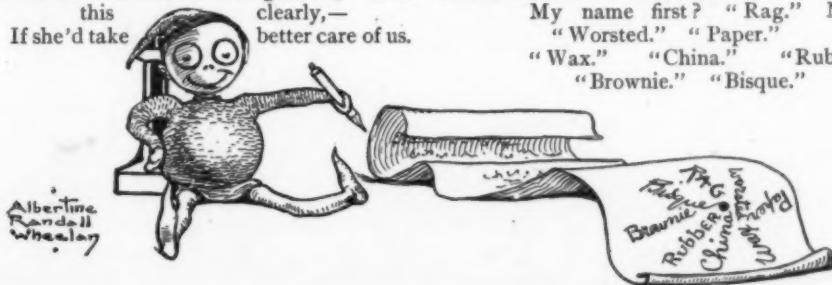


CHINA



THE RUBBER DOLL. (Sighing.) That child!
 THE BISQUE DOLL. I think some one should scold her,
 There 's danger of her being spoiled.
 THE RUBBER DOLL. She does n't mean to be so careless.
 THE RAG DOLL. I don't mind how she batters me.
 THE BISQUE DOLL. I should say not! Your head is hairless,
 And you 're as ragged as can be.
 THE WAX DOLL. My hand is smashed!
 THE CHINA DOLL. My foot is broken!
 THE WORSTED DOLL. I have n't seen my cap for days!
 THE PAPER DOLL. Perhaps a word in kindness spoken
 Would make our Polly mend her ways.
 THE RUBBER DOLL. Or mend her dolls.
 THE PAPER DOLL. (Laughing.) That *would* be better.
 THE WAX DOLL. I 'd like my arm put in a sling.
 THE RUBBER DOLL. Let 's send her a Round Robin letter.
 THE BISQUE DOLL. A good idea!
 THE RAG DOLL. The very thing!
 THE WAX DOLL. But who will write it?
 THE RAG DOLL. I 'm not able.
 THE BROWNIE DOLL. I think I am. I 'm pretty smart.
 THE RUBBER DOLL. Well, sit right down at this small table,
 Here is a pencil. Now let 's start.
 THE WAX DOLL. What shall we say?
 THE BISQUE DOLL. Don't write too gruffly,
 I 've no wish to offend the child.
 THE RUBBER DOLL. Oh, no, we must n't word it roughly.
 THE BROWNIE DOLL. All right, I 'll make it kind and mild.
 THE BISQUE DOLL. Tell her we love her very dearly,
 And we regret to make a fuss—
 THE WAX DOLL. But we 'd be grateful,—state this clearly,—
 If she 'd take better care of us.

THE BROWNIE DOLL. (Writing.) "Oh Polly dear, we love you madly,
 But you are naughty, without doubt,—"
 THE BISQUE DOLL. No, that won't do,—it sounds so badly.
 THE RUBBER DOLL. Here, take my head and rub it out.
 THE BROWNIE DOLL. Thank you.
 THE BISQUE DOLL. Now try a new beginning.
 THE BROWNIE DOLL. (Writing again.) "Our Polly dear, we love you much,
 Your smile is sweet, your ways are winning,
 But, oh, destruction is your touch!"
 THE RAG DOLL. Tell her we love to have her pet us,
 We don't mind thumps and bumps and cracks.
 THE WAX DOLL. Speak for yourself! She should not set us
 Too near the fire if we 're of wax.
 THE WORSTED DOLL. She must n't give us to the kitten.
 THE CHINA DOLL. Nor step on us.
 THE PAPER DOLL. Nor get us wet.
 THE BROWNIE DOLL. Everything that you 've said, I 've written,
 And there 's room on the paper yet.
 THE BISQUE DOLL. Well, fill it up with greetings tender,
 Tell her our love is strong and true.
 THE WORSTED DOLL. And any loving message send her
 That as you write, occurs to you.
 THE RAG DOLL. Tell her we 're glad that we 're *her* dollies.—
 THE RUBBER DOLL. Of all small girlyies she 's our choice.—
 THE BISQUE DOLL. No smile is half so sweet as Polly's.—
 THE PAPER DOLL. No voice so merry as her voice.
 THE BROWNIE DOLL. There, now it 's done!
 THE BISQUE DOLL. We 'll light this taper,
 And sign and seal it.
 THE RAG DOLL. Come, be brisk!
 My name first? "Rag." Next!
 "Worsted." "Paper."
 "Wax." "China." "Rubber."
 "Brownie." "Bisque."



The Every-day Franklin

By Rebecca Harding Davis

ALL kinds of pæans have been sung in Franklin's honor during the last few months. Authors, scientific and newspaper men have grown hoarse in telling us why this old-time statesman and thinker and editor stood foremost in their ranks. But it seems to me that he had some human traits whose importance have escaped notice. Traits that make him very real to the Philadelphian, who, for a lifetime, has tramped every day the very pavements along which he trundled his wheel-barrow; who has read his worn old books, has used his stoves, his lightning rods, his laws and his countless other devices to make common daily life safe, clean, high—more worth the living of any man.

These little homely deeds of Franklin ought to be noted, because it was by virtue of them—not by his wise statesmanship or philosophy—that he took rank as one of the greatest of Americans. Consider for a minute.

This young man finds himself on the streets of a new village, of which almost every citizen, white, Indian or negro had been born somewhere else. There never, perhaps, was a community where affairs were so "mixed" as was Penn's City of Brotherly Love. The English Church folk were at odds with the Quakers, and both secretly regarded every new-comer as a person to be shunned. Franklin lived in the town through its period of cutting loose from the government which had ruled its citizens and their forefathers for centuries, and through the building up of a brand new government. Every citizen that he met out of doors had, as a rule, his own quarrel with his king—with the people of the other colonies and with most of the men on the streets. The laws of these old-time settlers, their standards of right and wrong in great matters and in small, varied from day to day.

You often hear loud praise of Franklin's statecraft; how he cleared the political horizon of the new country and gave it a steady footing among the older nations.

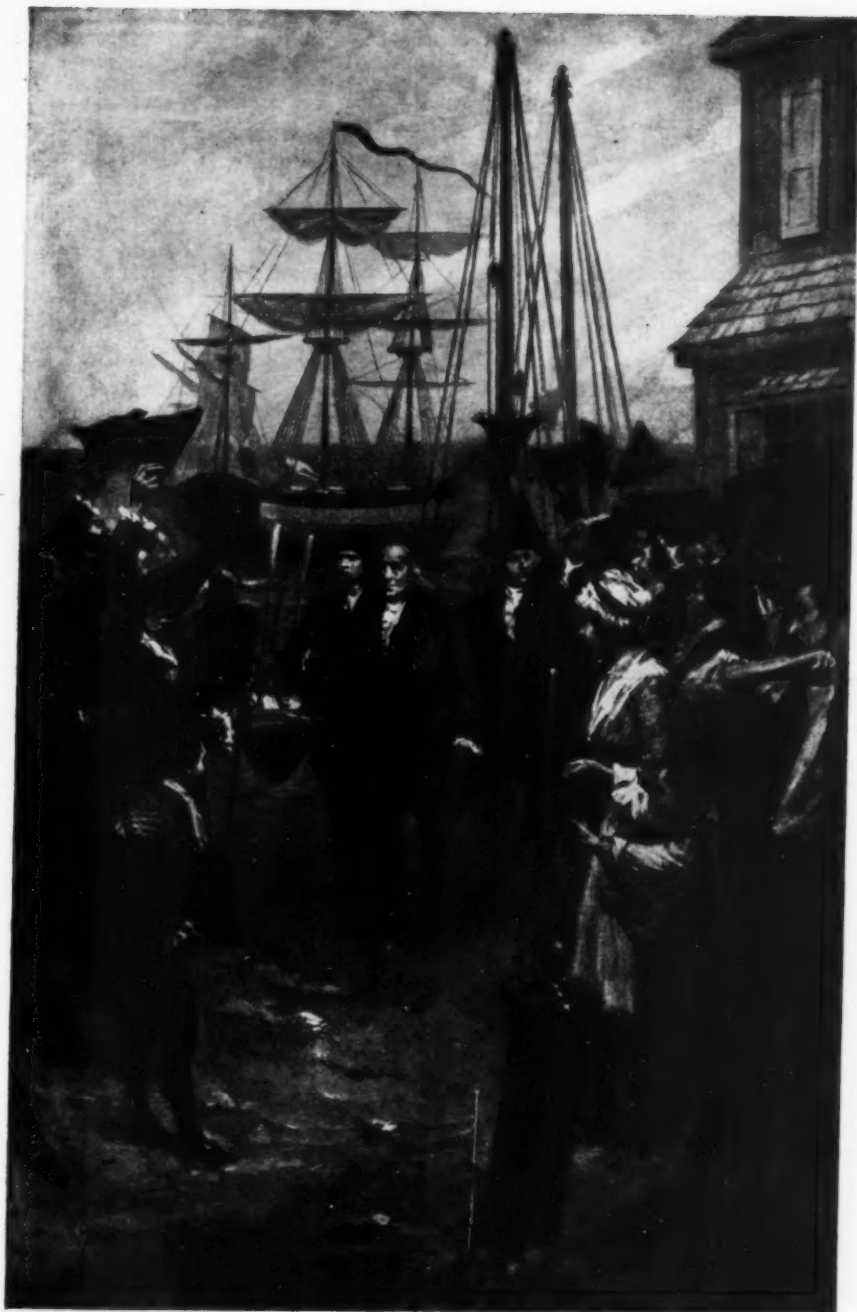
I beg you now to look at his work for his own town and for his neighbors. He was not loud nor anarchistic as the young radical

reformer is apt to be just now. He went about, sane, quiet, tactful, merely "setting things to rights"—big things and little. If he thought the people of this village—the people of this country—the people of the world, to whom the gates of the continent were now open—were to find peace and a full life here, big things and little must be set to rights at once. There was a homely every-day quality in the man that matched every-day needs. He had been, for some time, for example, secretly grappling with the lightning. He braced himself, conquered it, yoked it, and then, without a word of triumph, quietly explained to his neighbors how to put pointed rods on their roofs to save their houses from burning down. That was all. He never asked for gratitude or applause. One old historian tells us that "Benj. Franklin has put a chime of little bells on the walls of his house so that they catch the lightning and ring during a storm." So he had sometimes during the night from the heavens above him an echo of the applause which his neighbors begrudged!

Every day he was busy going about, putting germs of comfort and strength into the new community. One day he goes into a poor woman's house half of which is ice-cold because she is able to keep up but one fire. He promptly invents a stove which has a front on two sides and shows double glowing faces to cold rooms above one burning heart—the familiar "Franklin Stove." It is used all over the continent to-day.

Or, he strolls along Dock Street wharf one morning, and stumbles over a heap of filthy remnants of baskets in which roots had been brought from Amsterdam. No eye but Franklin's would have seen the single green sprout on one of the wythes. But he sees it, carefully cuts it away and carrying it to his neighbor, Mrs. Norris, asks leave to plant it in her garden, where the good lady herself tends and watches it. From that bit of live stalk have grown all the basket willows in this country, and an enormous industry.

Another day, it is an old broom which



FRANKLIN LANDING AT MARKET STREET WHARF ON HIS RETURN FROM
FRANCE. 1785.

The Every-day Franklin

shows to him a hint of life—a single green seed among its dusty straws. He plants the seed, after a year or two succeeds in growing a crop of corn, and the old chronicler Watson boasted, even in his day, that “there are twelve millions of brooms now made in this country from that one seed!”—How many hundred millions in our day?

The other apprentices and clerks who were this young printer's comrades were hungry for education, but had only two or three books apiece. “Let us,” he proposed, “put them all together on the mantle shelf in Rob Grace's room in Pewter Platter Alley, and use them in common.” A month or two later, the idea having grown in his busy brain, he called on thirty-eight prominent men of the town to subscribe forty shillings each for the purchase of books for this collection.

This was the first circulating library in the world, and the origin of all the others.

No need of his neighbors was too small to escape his keen eye and eager help. Fires in those days were common in the town; he introduced leathern buckets and it was he who invented the system of arranging double lines of men and women,—the men passing the full buckets and the women the empty ones. A simple matter! But so many simple matters like this,—good for the salvation of bodies and souls, have waited as long as that egg did on Columbus for the breaking!

Franklin organized bands of firemen later, and brought engines into regular use.

The great Pennsylvania hospital on Pine street was founded by Franklin. It was the first public hospital in the United States.

But while this pioneer American gave such actual good to his people, the principles that he taught them with which to face the problems of life could well be revived and used for our betterment to-day.

For instance—he was chosen for the office of Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in Philadelphia. The position gave him influence and respect. The salary was a com-

fortable addition to the income of a poor man. He suddenly resigned the office, quietly stating that he “had not sufficient knowledge of common law to hold it.”

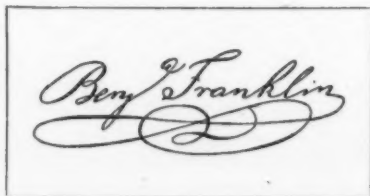
He was a still poorer man when he first began to edit a newspaper. In it he soon began to censure sharply several men of influence and high position in the town. His friends came to urge caution on him, assuring him that “no man could succeed without the backing of wealthy patrons.” Franklin listened in silence, and then, without answering his friends asked them cordially to stay to supper. They accepted. When they went into the room they found nothing on the table but cold water and corn-meal porridge. The young editor made no apologies but served the food, and ate of it himself.

“That is all, gentlemen,” he said when he had finished. “I only wished to convince you that when a man can live, as I have long done, on cold water and porridge, he does not need any man's patronage. He can do without it.”

Of course until the end of the world a military patriot will continue to be the idol of every people. Washington will remain the “Father of his country.” But our boys and girls should know more of the genius and sanity of the quiet old man who sleeps in an obscure corner of the old churchyard in Philadelphia, and of the impetus upward given to the new republic by his hand. At least, in recognition of his work, let us, when we build new hospitals or libraries in our towns and villages, sometimes give to them the name of the man who first made both known to the American people.

And could we not, too, with force and truth apply to the Republic itself the motto written by Franklin over the door of that first hospital in our country?

“Piously erected
For the relief of the poor and miserable.
May the God of Mercies
Bless the Undertaking.”



FRANKLIN'S AUTOGRAPH.



By Kendrick Ferris

Illustrated by Florence E. Storer

It had begun way back in November—the Sunday after Thanksgiving when Sallie Carter came in late to church with a gray astrakhan muff. The sermon was too “deep” for Vida, who had her hand at her face and was almost asleep, when a flash of gray in the next pew caused her to turn her head ever so slightly, and peep through her chubby fingers. There it stood on the velvet cushion beside Sallie, trim, warm, and lined with pearly gray satin, exactly like Mrs. Carter’s own beautiful big one, but smaller by half. A great longing began to grow in Vida’s heart, and she peeped again, this time at Sallie. Sallie’s golden curls had fallen riotously over her shoulders, hiding much of her face, but Vida could see enough. And just then the sermon came to an end.

But from that day on till the 17th of December, Vida thought of nothing but a gray muff—how she would look carrying it, how it would feel, and how every Sunday afternoon she would let poor Dorothy Haines carry it for a whole block, just as she had seen generous Sallie lend hers to the little lame girl in their Sunday School class.

On the 17th of December a great snow fell, and all the earth was white. At night the stars came out and the moon was full. It was the first snow storm of the winter, and Vida, by the light of the blazing logs in the nursery fireplace, wrote her annual letter to Santa Claus, posting it in the windowsill. In the morning, sure enough, it was gone, and Vida’s heart was light. She smiled at Sallie from her pew, feeling that still another bond was soon to be established between them, and, on the way home, found

and praised new beauties in the gray astrakhan muff. And so amidst greater good fellowship and happy expectations, the anxiously-awaited Christmas drew on apace.



“IN THE CORNER OF THE GREAT HALL SOFA,
VIDA FELL ASLEEP.”

The 25th fell on Sunday that year, and Saturday morning dawned bright and clear. The long, fat icicles, hanging above the nursery window, glistened in the sunlight,

and the hemlock boughs swept the ground under their weight of snow. Vida and her mother were standing together at the nursery window as, with a jingle of merry bells, the Carters' sleigh drove by. Vida sighed contentedly.

"To-morrow," she said, "I shall be carrying a gray astrakhan muff."

nothing but count on it ever since Santa Claus had found her note. Not count on it! Why, Christmas would be nothing without it!

But her mother was right—he might forget it among so many things! Why had n't she asked for only that one present? She did n't want those other things anyway,



"'OH, PAPA, PAPA,' SHE CRIED EXCITEDLY, 'SEE, THERE IS SOMETHING OUT ON THE ROOF!'"

Her mother looked at her questioningly. "Santa Claus will bring it to me," Vida said in answer to the look.

Her mother laughed merrily. "Why, Vida dear," she said. "You asked Santa Claus for seven other things—you said so only this morning. You could n't expect him to remember them all, and he's as likely to forget the muff as the French doll, or the tea set. It's foolish to count on any one thing when you made so long a list. I told you to be moderate." And her busy mother hurried off in answer to a call from Aunt Jane.

Not count on it! Why, she had done

and this was the day before Christmas—no word could reach Santa now.

The day passed feverishly for Vida. Upstairs and down she wandered from window to window, from person to person—anxious, unhappy, impatient. Would the long hours never go!

At last twilight came, and the darkness fell. And in the corner of the great hall sofa, facing the clock on the stairs, Vida, a disconsolate little body, fell asleep.

Her mother wakened her when it was time to hang up her stocking, and then, in spite of her warning, and in spite of her long hours of worry, hope was born again, and

when Vida kissed her mother good-night, visions of gray astrakhan muffs danced in her head.

"MERRY Christmas! Merry Christmas!"

It seemed to Vida she had but closed her eyes, and there stood mother and Aunt Jane beside her bed, one with her little worsted shoes and the other with her red eiderdown wrapper to hurry her over to the nursery where her father stood waiting at the door.

"Merry Cristmas! Merry Christmas! Oh, papa, I said it *first*!" she cried laughingly as her father caught her in his arms.

But what had Santa Claus done to the nursery? He had decorated the four walls and the chandelier with greens; and in the corner opposite the fireplace, he had stood a giant Christmas tree, bedecked with glittering knickknacks of every description. It was wonderful!

Vida drew a quiet breath, and gave a little happy exclamation. Then she flew straight to the fireplace—the muff should be there.

Of the seven presents six were not forgotten, and there were others she had not asked for: a pearl-handled knife in the toe of her stocking (she had remembered how much she needed a knife only yesterday morning); an album for her postal cards—why had n't she thought of that? She had over a hundred postals that Uncle Jack had sent her—of course she wanted an album. A cuckoo clock, that even as she looked, flung open its little carved doors, and shot out the cuckoo. It was seven o'clock. Surely no little girl ever had a more beautiful Christmas!

But Vida's lips were quivering, and a great lump swelled in her throat. The muff—the beautiful gray astrakhan muff, was not there! Santa Claus had forgotten it!

But Vida was brave. And she would not let those who loved her see her cry, or suspect her disappointment. She turned away from them and went over to the north window, fighting with her tears.

The kitchen roof stretched out under this window, and for days now even the print of a bird's claw had not broken its mantle of white. But now Vida looked at it in wonderment, for the beautiful crust was sadly broken, and a line of tracks ran from the edge of the roof, and back to—

"Oh, papa, papa," she cried excitedly, "come here, come here right away. See, there is something out on the roof!"

Her father opened the window quickly, and climbed out. Vida's heart beat so wildly she could scarcely speak. Her father was picking up a box—it was about the size of Aunt Jane's cookie jar, and it was round.

"Well," her father said, as he climbed back laughing into the nursery. "Here's something Old St. Nick dropped, and from its size I guess it's meant for you."

Vida's hands trembled so she could scarcely tug off the round top of the box. Just as it was about to yield, a sudden fear fell upon her heart.

"Papa, perhaps—perhaps he did n't mean it for me. Perhaps he dropped it and it belongs to some other little girl."

Her father's eyes twinkled.

"Look at the bottom of the box, Little One," he said.

Vida turned the box upside down. There was her name—Vida Sumner Lane, as plain as plain could be, and while she was staring at it open mouthed, out dropped—not a little gray astrakhan muff, but a beautiful soft *chinchilla* one and a little collar to match! And Sallie Carter peeped through her fingers that Christmas morning at the happiest little girl in all Christendom.

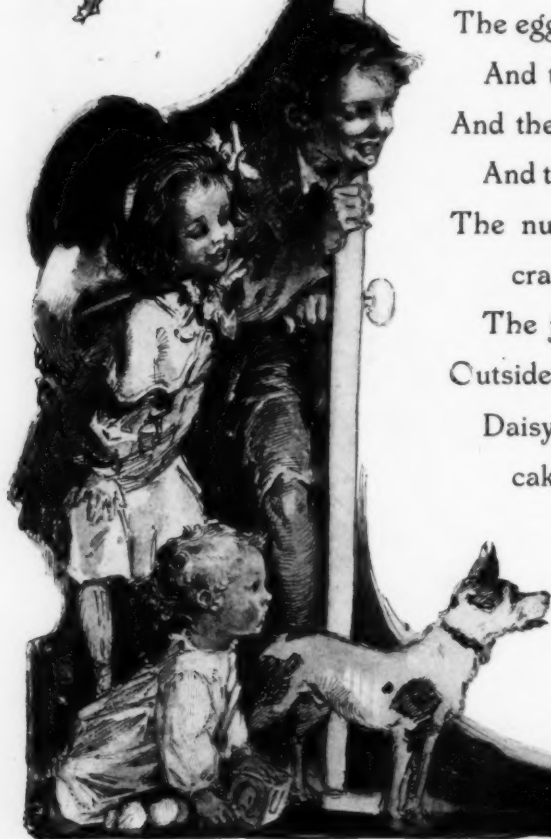


For Christmas Day

NANCY · BYRD · TURNER

T

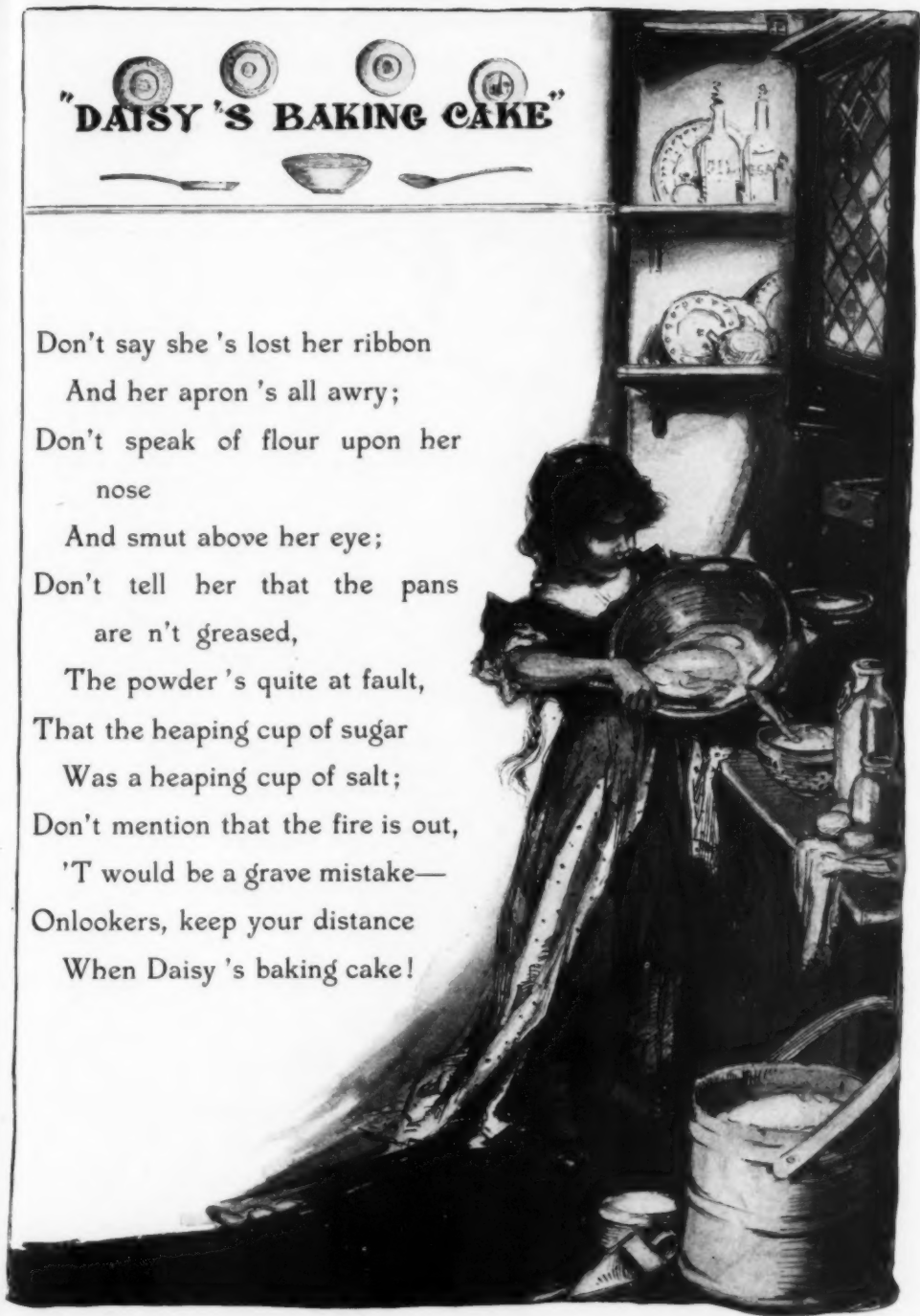
HERE 's a bustle in the kitchen
And a rattle and a din,
And such peculiar goings-on
You 'd best not venture in;
The eggs are being beaten
And the butter 's being dripped,
And the flour 's being shaken
And the cream is being whipped;
The nuts have had their heads
cracked,
The jelly 's all a-quake;
Outsiders, keep your distance—
Daisy 's making Christmas
cake!



"DAISY'S BAKING CAKE"



Don't say she's lost her ribbon
And her apron's all awry;
Don't speak of flour upon her
nose
And smut above her eye;
Don't tell her that the pans
are n't greased,
The powder's quite at fault,
That the heaping cup of sugar
Was a heaping cup of salt;
Don't mention that the fire is out,
'T would be a grave mistake—
Onlookers, keep your distance
When Daisy's baking cake!



Mother Goose Continued

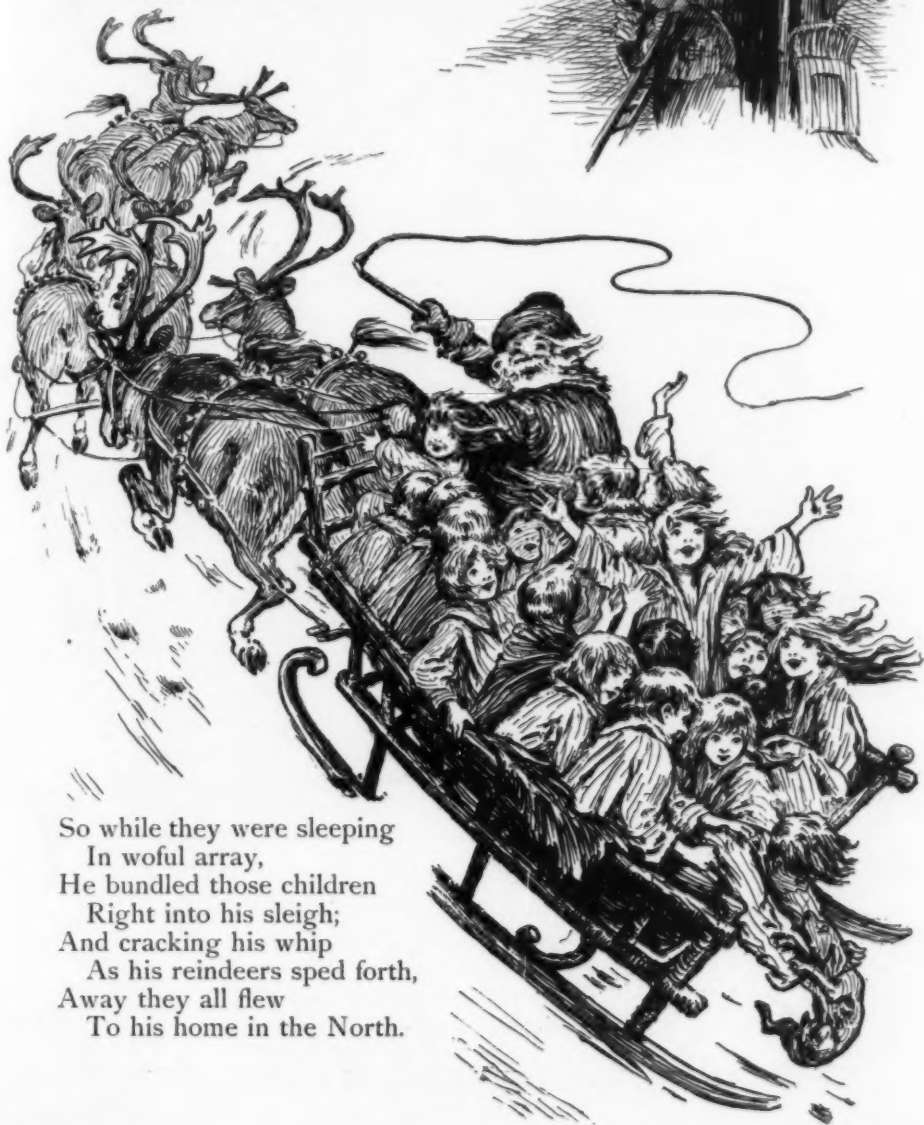
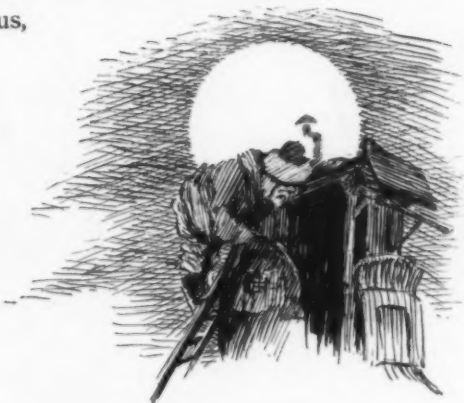
By Anna Marion Smith



here was an old woman
Who lived in a shoe ,
Who had so many children
'She didn't know what to do
'She gave them some broth
Without any bread
And whipped them all soundly
And sent them to bed . "



Now it happened that Santa Claus,
Passing that way,
Peeped into the shoe top
And saw how they lay—
With their round, rosy faces
All shining with tears,
And resolved to do something
To comfort the dears.



So while they were sleeping
In woful array,
He bundled those children
Right into his sleigh;
And cracking his whip
As his reindeers sped forth,
Away they all flew
To his home in the North.

FOR VERY LITTLE FOLK



What wonders he showed them,
 Such beautiful toys!
 Such dolls for the girls,
 And such drums for the boys!
 Such farms and such stables,
 Such monkeys and bears,
 Such dishes and tables
 And tiny dolls' chairs!

And when they had seen
 All the wonderful things
 Which each winter, at Christmas,
 Dear Santa Claus brings,
 He gave them, to make
 Their enchantment complete,
 Just all of the candy
 And cake they could eat.



When they told of their travels,
 Their mother, it seems,
 Only laughed, and declared
 They were nothing but dreams.
 I am sure, though, things *must*
 Have occurred as they say,
 Else why were they, all of them,
 Ill the next day?

3/10/0

What Rosemary Says

By Emily Lennox



I HATE those horrid little bears—
They do put on so many airs!
She has n't kissed *me* once for weeks—
She hugs *him* till he fairly squeaks!
I am not jealous—not at all!
I always act like a well-bred doll!
But when he bites her—you will see
She 'll be glad enough to play with me.



A variety of tinsel and other ornaments, especially the festoons of popcorn string, on the Christmas tree, have their counterpart in the fluffy masses of snow and glistening bits of ice on the outdoor evergreen trees. The decorative arrangements of a variety of Holiday goods in show windows suggest the dried weeds, burrs, leaves, seed pods, vines, lichens and mosses on walls and "cozy corners" in the fences.

DECEMBER DRAPERIES AND DECORATIONS.

In December especial attention is given to decorations. The interior of stores and their



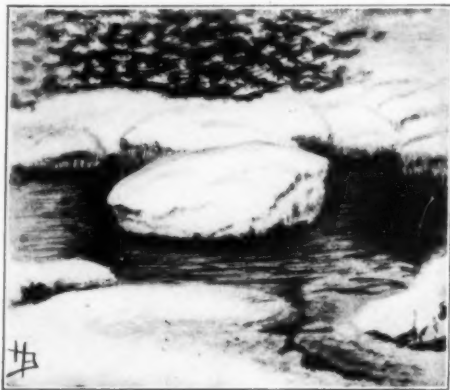
SHELF AND TABLE DRAPERIES AND DECORATIONS HAVE THEIR PARALLEL IN NATURE.

show windows are then attractively ornamented and festooned. The stores in the Holiday season are well-known centers of interest for their attractively-displayed and tempting exhibits. Even the sidewalks in front of many of these places are fenced in with a green display of Christmas trees from Maine. The churches have elaborate decorations in the shape of arches, crosses, loops and wreaths of green, and in many instances with the addition of suspended bells and swinging doves. We even add strings of sleighbells and plumes to the horses.

Seasonable decorations and draperies of the

home include not only the shelves and center tables, but extend to holly and other Christmas greens in the windows.

So in nature this month come the special draperies and decorations and ornaments not used since last winter. Perhaps you insist that nature is more beautiful in the



A FRINGED "TABLE SPREAD" IN THE BROOK. Snow-covering of rocks with delicate ice formations on edges.

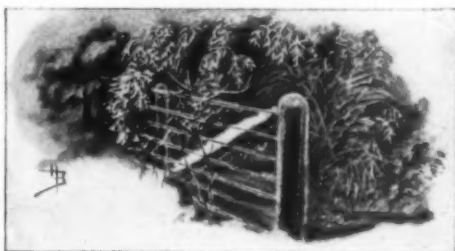
months of flowers and foliage. Perhaps she is. That is a matter of taste. Some would insist

that nature in all her general aspects is more beautiful in the warm than in the cold months. Yet there are some lovers of the winter that would dispute this point. But among the commoner things of nature, we may find beauties that may well be compared to wall and ceiling ornaments of home or church.

As a shelf is often draped and the bric-à-brac especially arranged for the Holidays, so nature has her special decorations. This shelf decoration was first impressed upon

seemingly infinite in the variety of the beautiful forms it presents.

Christmas trees within doors are not the



JACK FROST'S PLUMES.

A sleet decoration of twigs and branches at the entrance to a field.



A "FRIEZE" DECORATION BY FREEZING.

Icicles on the eaves of a house.

me by studying the forms taken by the ice and frost on the eaves of houses and along the brook side. What a wonderful decorator is Jack Frost and how frequently he makes changes! He almost never repeats. Even among snowflakes there are seldom, if ever, two alike. The slow unfolding and growth of summer are truly beautiful, but there is nothing in summer that can equal winter in its sudden and complete pictorial changes. The fascinating beauty of even one section of the bank of a rivulet that I frequently

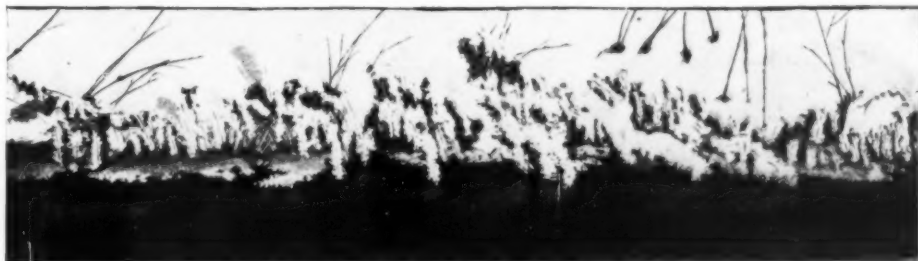
only trees decorated and draped for a short time in glittering tinsel, graceful festoons and garlands in beautiful variety. In almost any walks in the woods in winter, one may see equally beautiful and transient tree decora-



THE POMPONS OF THE MEADOWS.

Masses of the plumose long tails of the fruit of clematis (or "virgin's bower") on the alder bushes.

tions. The snow-laden, twining stems of vines on certain trees remind one of festoons of pearls. The glistening of the snowflakes on



THE LACE-LIKE LAMBREQUINS OF THE BROOK BANK.

Dainty, spear-like and feathery frost forms on dried grasses overhanging the water (the lower, dark portion).
*Seen on an early, frosty morning.

visit in the winter, would delight an artist. It is an early, bright morning when the "cold is like a kaleidoscope, never twice alike and snap" has suddenly followed foggy weather

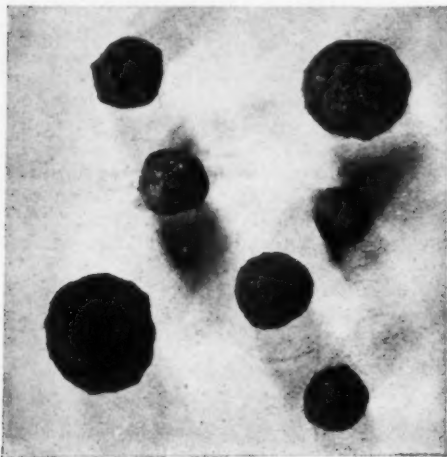
NOTE:—The illustrations on this and the preceding page were drawn directly from nature or from photographs.

makes every tree a glittering gem. A similar morning following a rain, or "ice storm" as we sometimes call it, and what wonderful spheres, what fantastic forms in every direction in gold, silver, even in crystal sheaths reflecting all the colors of the rainbow!

PELLETS OF MUD.

ARMOUR, SOUTH DAKOTA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Will you please tell me what are these little balls of mud which I send? They are



THE PELLETS OF MUD.

very hard and I found them in the mud at the edge of a small pond. I should like to know what they are made of and what makes them.

Your interested reader,
CHARLES CRUTCHETT.

The pellets of mud are pellets of "gumbo" which bakes very hard, as you know, in the sun. They are made by the common crayfish which lives in the muddy ponds and streams. As the crayfish digs down into the mud near the water's edge he throws back the mud in the shape of these little pellets. Just how he rolls them I do not know and have never been able to see one at work. I imagine of course it is done with the maxillipeds and the legs. The crayfish builds a wall of these around the hole sometimes several inches high and oftentimes covers the opening so as to give the place the appearance of a little mound of mud pellets.—Shirley P. Miller, Zoologist, South Dakota Agricultural College.

The habits of crayfish vary in different places, but many of these "chimney" or mound-building forms make pellets of mud. See article "Warrior Mound-builders," page 651 of *Nature and Science* for May, 1904. Pellets of mud dropped or discarded by the builders are often found lying around in the vicinity of such mounds.

A BLUE HERONS' NESTING PLACE.

A PLACE of rare interest to bird-lovers in Michigan is a great blue herons' nesting place ten miles west of Battle Creek on the north bank of the Kalamazoo river. It is notable because there are now only a few nesting places of this handsome and majestic bird left in that state. It is still more notable from



THE GREAT BLUE HERONS' NESTING PLACE.

(Photographed by Guy Mannering.)

the fact that the few others are in inaccessible swamps, while this one is on dry ground, only a short distance from an interurban electric line, and can be reached without difficulty by ornithologists—as easily by the women as by the men. It is visited annually by hundreds of bird-students from all sections of the state.

Great blue herons are home lovers, and become so attached to the place of their birth that they always return to the same nesting place and even the same tree. They have been known to nest in one place for fifty years. This colony has nested on the Kalamazoo river for twenty-two years.

A sycamore tree is always selected as the first home tree, because the color of the bark harmonizes perfectly with the color of their plumage, thus affording protection for both birds and nests. In this gigantic sycamore

were originally thirteen nests. The tree is thirteen feet in circumference and 100 feet high up to the first branches. From this tree the colony has spread out to several elm trees.

The nests are a most interesting sight and are so large that they can be seen from a distance of one mile. They are huge, rude structures, built of good-sized twigs and sticks, loosely placed together, forming a sort of lattice work, upon which the eggs are laid. The birds use the same nest every season, adding more sticks to shape it up when they return the following season. The eggs number from three to four, of a bluish green color, and are a little larger than hens' eggs.

The herons during the nesting season are of great benefit to the farmers, as they destroy all the snakes and field mice for miles around.

When feeding the young, the noise and commotion made by the fledgelings can be heard at a great distance. The blue heron is a majestic appearing and most beautiful bird. It is frequently erroneously called the sand hill crane. It is a solitary bird except when nesting, and is wild and shy.

CHARLES EMMETT BARNES.

PHOTOGRAPHING SPITZ PUPPIES.

The little fellows were very restless, and numberless snap-shots were tried, all with the invariable result—one or more of the puppies would always be blurred. Especial trouble was caused by their tails, which seemed in perpetual motion.

Finally, a large piece of black cloth was secured, and stretched like a screen. Six holes were then cut in the cloth, and the head of a puppy inserted in each, the photographer meantime having his instrument focussed, and in readiness. At this juncture, a large and steaming dish of food was placed on the ground in front of the screen. Behold! the result!

ANDREW P. HILL.

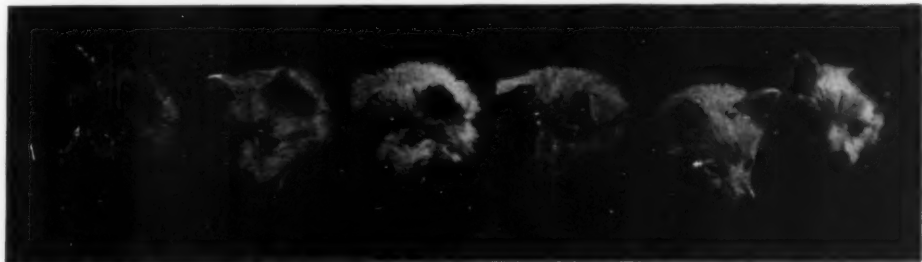
HOW MANY LEAVES HAS SHE?

HERE is a nature student, right from the woods. To the St. NICHOLAS boy or girl who



HOW MANY LEAVES HAS SHE?

writes the best letter (received by me before January 1st) regarding the leaves she has, and interesting particulars regarding them, I will send a book on nature study. Direct reply to Edward F. Bigelow, Stamford, Conn.



THE RESULT OF THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S TRICK.

Copyright, Andrew P. Hill, San Jose, California.

BECAUSE WE
WANT TO KNOW
????????????

St. Nicholas
Union Square,
New York

A LARGE HOLLOW PEBBLE.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I found this queer rock under a plum-bush. I have been wondering how it got there, because there is no water around it and not many other stones either. Please tell me how it got there.



THE HOLLOW PEBBLE.

EAGLE PASS, TEXAS.

From your loving
reader,
TROY B. ANDERSON.

Your specimen would be described by most young folks, I think, as a bubble-like pebble. The scientist would use longer words but mean much the same thing. He would say that it is composed of chalcedony (a variety of quartz)—a concretion of the material that was probably never filled.

A LUNAR RAINBOW.

SPRING BROOK, WILLIAMS COUNTY, N. D.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS:—Several nights ago I saw a funny cloud. It was of all colors like a rainbow. It was right beneath the moon. Can you tell me the reason of the colored cloud? One of my little sisters said that on Saturday, December 9th, she saw the moon go under a colored cloud.

Yours sincerely,
EVANGELINE KINGSTON (age 11 years).

You saw a lunar rainbow, and a beautiful thing it always is, too. The clouds high up in the air acted on the moonbeams, as the raindrops act on the sunbeams to make a solar or sun rainbow. A lunar rainbow is so interesting, that the Government Weather Observer always records its occurrence in his monthly reports.

FUNGUS.

THE RED HOUSE, STOCKSFIELD-ON-TYNE.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am writing to you again to ask the name of another fungus which my brother found in a field. It has a buff colored cap, honey-combed all over and meeting the stalk at the base, the honey-comb becoming smaller at the top of the cap. Its stalk is biscuit-coloured white, widening at the bottom, with deep creases and recesses in it. The fungus is hollow throughout.

Your interested reader,
RUTH ADAMS.

This is the *Morchella esculenta* or "honeycomb morel," one of the most highly-esteemed edible mushrooms. The head has been called "a weather-beaten honey-comb" in appearance. It is found in wet weather in the early part of the year. It is of interesting appearance, but we caution our young people *not to attempt to eat it*. Leave that to the specialists who will make no mistake as to the particular species that is good to eat. In this country it is "quite common in West Virginia, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, in orchards on ashes and cinders, under walnut, pine and oak trees." (McILVAINE.)



THE
MOREL FUNGUS.

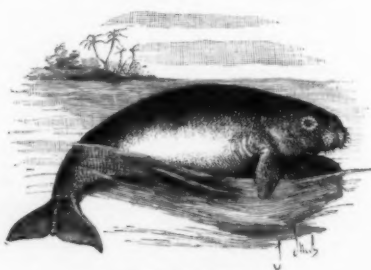
MERMAIDS AND MERMEN.

HALIFAX, N. S., CANADA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: A friend of mine said that her father, who was a sailor, once saw two mermaids singing on a rock in the Mediterranean Sea. Are there really such things?

Your interested reader,
HELEN E. STAIRS.

Mermaids—and less frequently mentioned mermen—are mythical or fanciful beings that



THE DUGONG.

This and the seals pictured on the following page are probably the origin of the myths of mermaids and mermen.

are supposed to live within and under the sea. They are usually pictured with the form of a human being above the waist and that of a fish below. The typical mermaid is supposed to be of exceeding loveliness. Her hair is long and beautiful and she is often represented as



THE NORTHERN FUR SEAL.

combing it with one hand, while in the other she holds a looking glass.

Who would be
A mermaid fair,
Singing alone,
Combing her hair
Under the sea?

TENNYSON—"THE MERMAID."

Nearly all nations have folk-lore and fairy tale accounts of mermaids, and sometimes of mermen. Even the American Indians had their "woman-fish" and "man-fish." The Chinese tell stories about their sea-women of the southern seas. Sometimes mermaids and mermen are represented as leaving the water and living with human beings, but more fre-



THE SEA ELEPHANT.

quently they are pictured as being so attractive that they sometimes will lure human beings to destruction in the depths of the sea. These myths have been utilized by many poets, and have even been used for stories "with a moral." Most encyclopedias and Baring Gould's "Myths of the Middle Ages" give interesting histories of the myths and the extent to which they have been held by various nations.

It is not within the scope of "Nature and Science" to go into details of these myths,

however interesting they may be, but to explain their natural history origin and basis.

Sir James Emerson Tennent, writing of the dugong, says:

"Its head has a rude approach to the human outline, and the mother holds her infant in one flipper, arm-like as does a human mother. If disturbed it suddenly dives under the water, and tosses up its fish-like tail. It is this creature which has probably given rise to the tales about mermaids."

It seems probable that this author was partly right, but the whole "responsibility" should not be put upon the dugong. Many other marine animals have human resem-



THE NORTHERN SEA LION.

blance, especially in attitude and when seen from a distance. Ernest Ingersoll writes:

"Various seals . . . have a way of lifting their round heads and shoulders from the water, with a queer human intelligent look upon their faces, and hugging their young to their bosoms with motherly affection. Impressed with this resemblance, easily turned into a story to beguile a long winter evening or to amuse a child, and growing with imaginative repetitions, the northern people were quick to believe the similar and more elaborate stories brought to them by early voyagers, and so the tales grew and changed into the rich folk-lore."

So, more directly to answer your question, there are in fancy, fairy tales, folk lore and



THE BEARDED SEAL.

legends, plenty of mermaids and fewer mermen, but alas! *not one in reality.*

ST. NICHOLAS LEAGUE

FOR DECEMBER

THE JOY OF GIVING.

GLADYS M. ADAMS (AGE 16).

(Cash Prize.)

I SHARED my crust with a poorer one,
And the crust—which had seemed
but a bit of bread
When *one* would eat—was a glorious
feast
When shared with another, instead.

I shared my bed with a poorer one—
So poor a bed, but a board or two—
But 't was soft as feathers to me, and
I slept
With a peace that I rarely knew.

I shared my joy with a poorer one,
And lo! 't was increased to a joy
divine
For another was cheered by the
kindly thought,
When they felt that joy of mine.

My gifts were poor, but were of my
best,
I had given myself when I gave my food.
But the joy that came transfigured all,
And I felt that God was good.

For a selfish joy is an empty thing,
Since it fades away as the passing dreams,
But the joy of giving is sweet and free,
And ever a new joy seems.

So share your best, though it be but poor,
With a willing heart and a spirit brave;
For a joy will come that will far outweigh
The trifle that you gave.



"A HOT DAY." BY MARIAN DRURY, AGE 15. (GOLD BADGE.)



"A HEADING FOR DECEMBER." BY
ALPHONSE DE CARRÉ, AGE 13.
(GOLD BADGE.)

*Now seven years have slipped away,
With picture, puzzle, prose and rhyme,
Since first we joined in roundelay
And sang the song of Christmas-time.*

In the seven years that have slipped by us since that first Christmas, more than two thousand young people have won gold and silver, and cash prizes, in the St. Nicholas League. Not one of these prizes has been awarded without a good reason—that reason being that the poem, or story, or picture, or whatever it happened to be, awakened the editor's interest and admiration. Often it did more than that. Often when the contribution was so good as to warrant one of the higher prizes, there came the strong desire to see how the boy or girl looked who could produce such work as that, and sometimes we have been tempted to ask for a photograph of the contributor. Now, at last, we are going to do just that thing. We are going to ask every gold-badge winner for a picture. Not only do we want pictures of those who are winning now, but of those, also, who have won any time during the seven years, and we would prefer a picture taken about the time when the badge was won. Of course, in that seven years a good many of our members have grown into men and women, and some of them are still following their old League work in the world's wider fields. Of these we want two pictures—one taken during their League days, and one taken now, with a brief letter telling just what has been done—how much progress has been made along the chosen path. And some of these, from time to time, we would like to print in the magazine, for we are sure it will interest our readers as well as ourselves to see the faces of those who have found the League a sort of garden that lies along the foothills of success.

BUT there are some (perhaps many) who failed to win first honors in the League, yet who have persevered and striven on, and who are winning triumphs all the more deserved because they refused to confess discouragement when the longed-for badge failed to come. Of these especially do we want pictures, for to these go our deepest admiration and heartiest God-speed. Let

us have the pictures, then, and we will make an album that is worth while, and we will let our readers see some of it, too.

PRIZE-WINNERS, AUGUST COMPETITION.

Verse. Cash prize, **Gladys M. Adams** (age 16), 36 Emery St., Medford, Mass.

Gold badges, **Eleanor C. Hamill** (age 16), 2637 Prairie Ave., Chicago, Ill., and **Eleanor Johnson** (age 8), in care of E. I. Johnson, Office U. S. Att'y, N. Y. City.

Silver badges, **Aimée Loizeaux** (age 16), 1010 3d St., Des Moines, Ia., and **Aline Chown** (age 15), Great Falls, Mont.

Prose. Gold badges, **Ellen Elizabeth Patten** (age 15), Hampden Corner, Me., and **Isabel A. Oldham** (age 14), Kearney, Neb.

Silver badges, **Kathryn Maddock** (age 13), 940 Sherman Ave., Evanston, Ill., and **Garrett Mattingly** (age 6), 1819 First St., N. W. Washington, D. C.

Drawing. Gold badges, **Alphonse De Carre** (age 13), 3522 13th St., Washington, D. C., and **Roland Coate** (age 15), 35 S. 12th St., Richmond, Ind.

Silver badges, **Peggie Guy**, Fulford Vicarage, York, Eng., and **Harry Griffith**, 923 Superior St., Toledo, O.

Photography. Gold badge, **Marion Drury** (age 15), 66 Paradise Rd., Northampton, Mass.

Silver badges, **Ruth Duncan** (age 13), Gadsden, Ala., and **Maude J. Hayden** (age 9), St. Davids, Pa.

Wild-Creature Photography. First prize, "Moose," by **Margaret Sears** (age 14), 30 Greystone Park, Lynn, Mass. Second prize, "Possum," by **Louise Chapman** (age 14), Lake Geneva, Wis. Third prize, "Horned Toad," by **F. W. Foster** (age 17), 994 Dorchester St., Montreal, Can.

Puzzle-Making. Gold badges, **Mina Summy** (age 14), 1831 North 4th St., Columbus, Ohio, and **Thomas DeWind** (age 16), 203 Coade Ave., Grand Rapids, Mich.

Silver badges, **Albertina L. Pitkin** (age 15), 194 Riverside Drive, New York City, and **Clarina Hanks** (age 14), 44 Circuit Road, Chestnut Hill, Mass.

Puzzle Answers. Gold badges, **Jessie Metcalf** (age 13), 1929 N. Penn. St., Indianapolis, Ind., and **Elizabeth C. Beale** (age 11), 29 Chauncy St., Cambridge, Mass.

Silver badges, **Arthur P. Caldwell, Jr.**, 309 Union Ave., Cranford, N. J., and **Marie Ruebel** (age 16), 4649 Cottage Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS-TREE.

BY ISABEL A. OLDHAM (AGE 14).

(Gold Badge.)

I WONDER if the little boys and girls who impatiently await each Christmas Eve for their Christmas-

tree, know that the very first one was decorated a long time ago for the Princess Mary, who was afterwards so sadly known as "Bloody Mary"?

Her father told the master of ceremonies that he must think of something very wonderful, that had never been heard of before, for his gift to the Princess that Christmas-tide. King Henry was very strict and apt to cut off the persons' heads who did not do as he wished, so the master of ceremonies thought and thought. Finally he decided upon the very thing, and told the King, who was greatly pleased and told all the

ambassadors from the countries of Europe, and the English lords and ladies to give their gifts for Mary to the master of ceremonies, and he also invited them to a Christmas ball to be held at the palace.

Finally Christmas night came. Just at twilight a flood of light poured from the palace windows. Carriages, magnificent but clumsy, bowed up to the entrance. Bejeweled ladies and gentlemen stepped forth and were escorted by armed guards to the doors.

Outside of the palace a great crowd of London's poor stood, for it was the custom of England's kings to give bountifully on Christ's birthday.

Inside—I shall not attempt to describe the magnificence of the jewels, satins, laces, cloths of gold, silver and velvet, but nothing more gorgeous can be imagined, not even in the days of Aladdin.

Opposite the drawing-room were King Henry, Queen Kath-

erine and Princess Mary.

When the last guest was seated, the drawing-room doors were opened, and what do you think the King



"A HOT DAY." BY MAUDE J. HAYDEN, AGE 9. (SILVER BADGE.)



"A HOT DAY." BY RUTH DUNCAN, AGE 13. (SILVER BADGE.)



"A HEADING FOR DECEMBER." BY HARRY GRIFFITH, AGE 15.
(SILVER BADGE.)

and his guests saw? Not a pine-tree decorated by candles, with dolls, tea-sets and pop-corn balls upon it, but a small rosemary bush bedecked with diamond necklaces and bracelets and many other valuable jewels.

You and I would not like a Christmas tree without dolls, or drums, or horns, but Mary was more than delighted. She kissed her father, and thanked the master of ceremonies, and every one clapped and was pleased; and I hope, in their happiness, they did not forget the crowd of poor.

And now we all have seen a Christmas tree and do not think it half as wonderful as did the little Princess hundreds of years ago in her father's kingdom of Old England.

THE JOY OF GIVING.

ELEANOR C. HAMILL
(AGE 16).

(Gold Badge.)

BLOOMING all day in the
shadow
With never an eye to
behold,
A violet grew in the
springtime,
After the frost and the
cold.

"Then what is the use of
my growing
Where no one cares to
see
The way I've been trying
to blossom?"
It said to the bumble-bee.

Just then a childish figure
Bent over its hiding
place;

"Oh, here is a little
violet!"

She cried with a glowing
face.



ST NICHOLAS LEAGUE

"A HEADING FOR DECEMBER." BY FEGGIE GUY, AGE 14.
(SILVER BADGE.)

Clasped tight by the little maiden,
It nodded its happy head,
Till placed by the little sister
Beside a sick child's bed.

For many days it stayed there,
Cheering the little child,
Who kissed each morning its petals,
Then lay back gentle and mild.

The child at last grew stronger,
And all his long life through,
He remembered the little flower
And loved its brothers too.

A HISTORIC CHRISTMAS.

BY ELLEN ELIZABETH PATTEN (AGE 15).

(Gold badge.)

"TUESDAY, December 25, we were awakened before day by a discharge of three platoons from the party. We had told the Indians not to visit us as it was one of our great medicine days; so that the men remained at home and amused themselves in various ways, particularly with dancing, in which they take great pleasure. The American flag was hoisted for the first time in the port; the best provisions we had were brought out, and this, with a little brandy, enabled them to pass the day in great festivity."—From the Journal of Lewis and Clark.

When Christmas eve came, the men had finished the stockade and the gate had been shut. By the protection of forty-five men and a blunderbuss, Fort Mandan was safe from savages from the north. Not that they were hostile. Many thronged here, partly for trade, partly from curiosity; but on this evening Captain Lewis sent out word that they should not visit him and his men the next day. He told them it was the great medicine day of the white man.

Before daybreak, both the Indians and the white party were "awakened by a discharge of three platoons." A flag was floating above the palisade, and the first Dakota Christmas had begun.

Instead of the usual "Christmas stocking," every man was given a certain amount of dried apples, pepper and flour. To complete the Christmas feast were squash, corn, beans, and Buffalo meat. Dinner was at one o'clock.

At two, the signal for dancing was given. The orchestra consisted of Cruzatte and Gibson. William Clark called the changes. A number of wondering squaws watched

them,—the wives of their interpreters. Among them was the wife of Charbonneau, the cook, Sacajawea, the Shoshone "bird-woman," who afterward became their faithful guide through the Rockies. Without her, they would have been lost and helpless.

And so the first Christmas ever celebrated in Dakota passed away among the fair-haired, blue-eyed Mandans. A century has passed since the wonderful expedition, but it will be long before the story of it will be forgotten by Americans.

THE JOY OF GIVING.

BY ELEANOR JOHNSON (AGE 8).

(Gold Badge.)

The painter, who gives to the world his art;
The singer, whose voice thrills the very heart;
The poet, whose soul is in his thought;
The soldier, who for his country fought;
All know the Joy of Giving.

The rich, who give with a lavish hand;
The farmer, whose labor tills the land;
The mother, who gives her loving care;
The minister, bent on daily prayer;
All know the Joy of Giving.

From all who give with a loving heart,
The Joy of Giving will ne'er depart.
And all over the world, both far and near,
The joy we welcome with love and cheer
Is the Joy of Christmas Giving.

A HISTORIC CHRISTMAS.

BY KATHRYN MADDOCK
(AGE 13.)

(Silver Badge.)

KING JOHN was celebrating Christmas at Winchester. His courtiers had come up from London and were having a merry time; the boar's head had been served up, the tapers burnt and the wassail bowl passed 'round. The Yule log was burning brightly and jests and songs were heard on every hand. John was moody notwithstanding all this: it was the year 1214 and his reign had hardly been what might be called a success. Most of it so far had been taken up by quarrels. He had lost his European possessions through a dispute with Philip of France, and a quarrel with the Pope had ended disastrously for the king. Rumors were now current as to a rising of the barons and John was anxious. The festivities



"MOOSE." BY MARGARET SEARS, AGE 14. (FIRST PRIZE, WILD ANIMAL PHOTOGRAPH.)

were to continue for several days but the king with a few attendants left on the day after Christmas.

On arriving at London John was greeted by a pageant so brilliant with the glittering arms of the nobles as to startle as well as surprise him. This parade was composed of the barons and their followers, and all were dressed in full armor. Magnificent horses in gay trappings helped to make the scene more attractive and here and there large banners wrought in beautiful silks were displayed. The procession was the outcome of two indignant meetings of the barons. In the first, held at St. Albans, their grievances had been discussed, and during the second at Bury St. Edmund's they had resolved to come before the king at Christmas and force him to sign a charter giving the English people their long neglected rights.

When John saw the nobles' array of military force he quavered, and when the document was presented to him he asked to be allowed to consider it till Easter. The barons were angry at having the purpose of their visit thus deflected, but they withdrew and waited till Easter. However little they accomplished at Christmas it was the first attempt toward gaining the king's signature for that important paper, the Magna Charta.

At Easter John refused to sign it, but seeing the determination of the nobles he set June fifteenth as the final date, and after much parleying the Charter was signed in the meadow of Runnymede in June. This important step in English history was the direct result of the efforts of the barons at Christmas.



"POSSUM." BY LOUISE CHAPMAN, AGE 14. (SECOND PRIZE, WILD ANIMAL PHOTOGRAPH.)



"HORNED TOAD." BY F. W. FOSTER, AGE 17. (THIRD PRIZE, WILD ANIMAL PHOTOGRAPH.)

THE JOY OF GIVING

BY ALINE CHOWEN (AGE 15).

(Silver Badge.)

The dark pines sharp 'gainst
the soft gray sky



"A HOT DAY." BY VIRGINIA SPECK FLAD, AGE 12.

The touch of the wind as it passes by,
The thin cloud of smoke and the fire's red glow
By the miner's dark huts in the coulee below,
The first cold drops of the coming rain
Make poetry rush into my brain.

But suddenly sounds the accordion gay
And two miners in joyous two-step sway,
First a gray shirt, then one of white
Gleams as they turn in the faint firelight,
And I on the ridge laugh loud, because
I know now the joy of giving applause.

A HISTORIC CHRISTMAS.

BY GARRETT MATTINGLY (AGE 6).

(Silver Badge.)

I WANT to tell you about an historic Christmas in which an ancestor of mine took part. When only twelve years old, Frederick Hesser ran away, joined his brother John and enlisted as a drummer boy in the drum corps in which John played a fife.

He served with Washington's army all through that cold and bitter winter at Valley Forge, where Washington, seeing him so young, half-starved and sick, placed his hand on Fred's head and kindly commanded him to go home. "Were all my soldiers as brave and patriotic as you, my lad, England could never conquer us," said Washington.

Fred went home on furlough, but returned as soon as he was well, and was with Washington that historic Christmas when the brave general crossed the Delaware and attacked the Hessians at Trenton. During this battle Fred's drumstick was shot from his hand. A soldier, seeing his plight, seized the gun from a dead comrade's hand, saying, "Here, my little man, this poor fellow does not need his gun. Take it and fight."

Years and years afterward, when Fred Hesser was

an old man in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, he still treasured the drum with its one drumstick.

On his death-bed he asked for his drum, and, propped up in bed, beat the last tattoo.

A descendant of Fred Hesser still preserves the old drum, and all of his descendants are proud of Fred Hesser, a drummer boy of Washington's army.

THE JOY OF GIVING

BY AIMÉE LOIZEAUX (AGE 16).

(Silver Badge.)

"NOT he who takes," spake the knowing sage,
Bent with the wisdom of bygone age,
"But he who gives for the Joy of Giving,
Who bedecks with kindness each day's white page,
'T is he who enjoys the gift of living."

Then came a child with gay and tripping feet,
With tattered dress, but eyes so grave and sweet,
She looked at sage and flashed a living smile.
Said he, "'T is all she gives me when we meet,
But see her joyousness the while."

A HISTORIC CHRISTMAS.

BY ELIZABETH C. FIELD (AGE 14).

It was in the reign of good King Edward whom the people called Edward the Confessor. Edward thought that he could leave the throne of England to any one he chose. He was very fond of a young French Duke named William. He promised William that he should rule after him. The only one who had any claim to the throne was Harold, who was the son of Earl Godwin.

One day Harold was wrecked on the coast of France and fell into the hands of William, who made him promise to help him secure the throne of England when Edward should die; but when in the year 1066 Edward died, Harold broke his promise and became King himself.

William was indignant. He collected troops and reached England as soon as possible. Then followed



"A HOT DAY." BY MARY F. RAYMOND, AGE 15.

the battle of Hastings, in which Harold was killed and William became possessor of England.

William wisely decided to let the people elect him King. He held a meeting in which he asked the people to choose him for their King. As he was so strong they dared not refuse.

On Christmas Day, 1066, he was proclaimed King of England. The coronation took place in Westminster

Abbey (which Edward the Confessor had built). As the crown was placed on William's head the people shouted "Yea, yea, yea!"

This historic Christmas is both old and important, for it was the beginning of more civilized life in England under William the Norman.

THE JOY OF GIVING.

BY MARGARET EWING (AGE 13).

(Honor Member.)

GREAT drifting, pillowy mass of clouds,
That float across the sky,
Exultantly and high,
What joy is thine!
To give to the parched earth again,
Quick, rushing coolness of the rain,
And onward fly,
O'er hill and dale in majesty divine,
Scattering with a mighty hand,
Thy bounty over sea and land—
O'er wheat-fields pale,
Where ragged pine woods darken hill and dale,
And where the mountain streams leap wild and free,
Given their very life by meed of thee,
And giving in their turn.
Oh, where the sunbeams on earth's meadows burn,
And flowers lift their heads to welcome coy,
The wooing of the rain—
There, when the showers patter down again,
Dost feel the giving-joy,
O clouds?

A HISTORIC CHRISTMAS.

BY AGNES HOLMES (AGE 15).

THERE must have been much excitement in the old town of Wells on Christmas Eve, 1332, for the young king Edward III had come to spend Christmas there. The Bishop had gone to stay at his Manor House at Wookey, two miles off, for the following week, as there was not room for both the king and himself at the palace, owing to the northwest wing not yet being built. But he must have returned to say mass in the Cathedral on



"A HOT DAY." BY LEWIS P. CRAIG, AGE 16.
(HONOR MEMBER.)

Christmas Day. The Banqueting Hall which to-day is a ruin and one of the chief sights of the Palace was only thirty years old; the battlemented walls were not yet in existence, neither was the Bishop's Eye built, so that the palace was seen from the Market Place. It is also difficult to realize that there was no moat and that the grass plot with the elms which to-day is near the drawbridge was then a pool of water. King Edward may quite possibly have been attracted to Wells by the fame of the new Chapter House and Lady Chapel which had just been built; but though the townspeople must have felt what an honor was done to them by the king's visiting Wells, yet one cannot help thinking what an expensive honor it must have been to the Bishop. Ralph of Shrewsbury, whose tomb is to be seen to-day in the north choir aisle in the Cathedral was Bishop in those days.

NOT ON THE JOY OF GIVING.

BY MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD (age 17).

(Honor member.)

ALAS! But selfish strains my muse indites,
And this is all the sort of thing she writes:—

Ah! Fare thee well, sweet Beauty,
Thou dear delight of unforgotten days,
And get thee hence, thou Duty,
Who wouldst to household use devote my lays!
I'll none of either; here, great Jove, defend me!
These damsels both in thy name I'll defy,
And thine own sky-bolts, gracious father, lend me,
Wherewith to hurl my angered minstrelsy.
For artful Beauty led me where she listed,
With dreams of drowsy magic shut my eyes,
With poppy-buds my pale brow she entwisted,



"A HOT DAY." BY CHARLOTTE LEWIS PHELPS, AGE 16.



"A HOT DAY." BY MIRIAM H. TANBERG, AGE 10. (HONOR MEMBER.)

And lulled me with her dizzy melodies,
Then ere I could the slumb'rous bonds dis sever,
With poised flight she fled my grasp forever.
By sterner witchcraft cold-eyed Duty led me;
She yoked me as a plowmate to dull Care,
The bitter bread of lost Ambition fed me,
And housed me in the desert of Despair.
Then whilst I raged in impotent endeavor,
Elected to remain with me forever!

So fare thee well, sweet Beauty,
Thou dear delight of dead, forbidden days,
And prithee hence, cruel Duty
Who dost to basest use compel my lays!

A HISTORIC CHRISTMAS.

BY ROBERT T. WILLIAMS (AGE 11).

ONE of the most beneficial Christmases that ever happened on the earth was the birth of Sir Isaac Newton, on Christmas Day, 1642, at Woolsthorpe, a hamlet in Lincolnshire, England.

Once when there was a windmill being built on a new plan near his house, he used to go and spend hours examining it. In a few days he was observed to be unusually busy with his tools. It was not long before the whole neighborhood knew what he had been doing. He had made a model of the windmill; though probably not more than a foot high, it was complete in every part. Once, when Newton was older, he had a little dog called Diamond; one day he got up and went out of the room, leaving on the table some manuscripts containing all the discoveries he had made about light, and little dog Diamond by the fire. No sooner had he gone than up jumps Diamond on the table, upsets the candle and burns the papers. Just as the destruction was completed Newton came in. Seeing what little dog had done he only patted him on the head and said, "O Diamond! thou little knowest the mischief thou hast wrought."

THE JOY OF GIVING.

BY ANNIE LAURIE HILLYER (AGE 14).

(Honor Member.)

BABY held an apple—
A delicious sight—
Bobbie thought so, begging,
"Please give me a bite?"

Baby showed her dimples—
She was just and fair—
"I'll be very gen'uous,
You may bite to—there!"

Bobbie's teeth were tiny—
Sharp they must have
been—
Exit—all the apple!
Enter—such a din!

Baby, blue eyes flashing,
Raced across the floor,
Caught the wicked robber
At the nurs'ry door.

Caught his small, brown
fingers—
Caught with all her
might—

And, in wrathful justice,
Gave, in turn, a bite!

A HISTORICAL CHRISTMAS.

BY HENRY RESCH (AGE 15).

WHEN looking up the various Christmas events one is struck by the great number of deaths which have occurred on that memorable day. One of the most important of these events was the death of Marcus Aurelius Carus, a Roman Emperor, who was killed by lightning in the year A.D. 283. Below is given a short history of his life.

Marcus Aurelius Carus was born at Narbonne in Gaul, Milan or Illyria in the year A.D. 222. His father was of African descent and his mother was a noble Roman lady. Marcus was educated in Rome for the highest military and civil offices. He held the office of praetorian prefect before he became Emperor. On the assassination of Probus in A.D. 282 he was proclaimed Emperor of Rome by the legions. His reign, though short was prosperous. One of the first of his acts of justice was to mete out punishment to the assass-



"A HOT DAY." BY JEANNETTE L. HEROTZHEIM.

sinators of Probus. He gained a victory over the Sermatians and prosecuted war with the Persians. In midwinter he led his army through Thrace in Asia Minor, ravaged Mesopotamia, mastered Seleucia and led his army beyond the Tigris.

Here on Christmas Day, in the aforementioned year, was struck by lightning one of the bravest and best of the Romans. History does not tell us the circumstances which surrounded him as he lay dying. We can only guess—that is all.

THE JOY OF GIVING.

BY LEONORA BRANCH (AGE 13).

I WAS curled up in the corner by my little reading table,

When the door was opened gently and there stood my sister Mabel.

"Edith, dear," she whispered softly, "I've a poem to show to *you*."

May n't I send it to the League for competition eighty-two?"

"Well, Miss Poetess," I answered, as I smiled into her face,

"I will summon all the jury to discuss this serious case."

Then she showed a scrap of paper. "This is it," she gravely said.

"Read it to me," I commanded, and this is the verse she read:—

"I tried as many times as six,
I can't see where the trouble lies,
For though I work with all my might
I cannot seem to win a prize.
But, dear St. Nicholas! I hope
Before I'm really very old,
You'll feel the joy of giving
When I win my badge of gold."

A HISTORIC CHRISTMAS.

BY ISABEL WEAVER (AGE 11.)

WHEN Harold the Second was killed at Hastings, the English people became disheartened, and made little resistance against the invasions of William, the Duke of Normandy. They soon submitted to him, and he was crowned at Westminster Abbey, London, on Christmas Day, 1066.

There were many people at the coronation. When Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances, rose and said in French to the Normans: "Will ye that William, your Duke, be crowned King of the English?" They all shouted "Yea!" Then Ealdred, the Archbishop of York, said in English: "Will ye that William, Duke of the Normans, be crowned King of the English?" And the people cried "Yea, yea!" so loudly that the Norman guards outside thought the English were offering resistance, and began setting fire to the nearby buildings. The people rushed from the church, some to extinguish the flames, and others, taking advantage of the confusion, to plunder.

William was left in the church with the Bishops, and a few others who had remained, and in the presence of these he took the oath of the old kings, vowing to do mercy and justice, and to rule as well as any king before him had ever ruled. Then Archbishop Ealdred anointed and crowned him, and William the Conqueror was King.

FRIENDS IN THE FOREST.

BY BERNARD F. TROTTER (AGE 16).

GIVE me no crowded city,
When my heart is lone and sad,
With its countless thronging thousands—
The tumult would drive me mad.

In the throbbing life of the city
Who cares for another's moan?—
Tho' around me the crowd was surging,
I would stand by myself, alone.



"DECEMBER." BY JOHN D. BUTLER, AGE 16.
(HONOR MEMBER.)

Give me no heaving ocean,
Give me no wind-swept plain;
For there—is but time for brooding,
Nothing to heal the pain.

But give me the wide-spread forest,
With its hemlock, and beach and pine;
With its ash, and its oak and its maple;
And its ferns, and its mosses fine.

With its rocky glens and streamlets;
And the music of waterfalls;
With its birds, and beasts and flowers;
And its dreamy wild-wood calls.—

Tho' I wander, alone, through the forest,
There are friends upon every hand,
Tried friends, who comfort and soothe me,
As they whisper "We understand."

IN THE FOREST.

BY GEORGIANA MYERS STURDEE (AGE 12).

(Honor Member.)

THE whisp'ring boughs of giant pines bend o'er me,
And from its nest the timid bird looks down,
The moss and clinging ivy are before me,
The silver birch bends o'er the stream of brown.

From out the mossy, wooded bank beside me
A crystal streamlet runs with pleasant sound;
None are about to see me or to chide me,
And peaceful rustic stillness reigns around.

A cooling breeze like spirit voices calling,
Blows through the quiet forest's leafy shade,



"DECEMBER." BY HELEN MAY BAKER, AGE 10.

And mingling with the stream's incessant falling,
Come birds' sweet carols from each sylvan glade.

The sound of far-off bells comes faintly blowing,
They ring again, and yet again, then cease;
From distant fields I hear the cattle lowing,
And over all there reigns a perfect peace.

THE FOREST PASTURE.

BY MASON GARFIELD (AGE 13).

(Silver Badge Winner.)

OVER the fields and meadows wide,
Over the old stone mill,
Over the brook that runs by its side,
And the road by the distant hill,
Over the pasture where mooly cow stays,
Up on the hill asleep
In the green woodland, amid the birds' lays,
Are lying the lazy sheep.

Over the meadows at close of day,
Wanders the bare-foot boy,
Singing merrily on his way,
The song of the shepherd's joy.
Up in the pine trees over the mill,
Over the meadows wide,

Through the gate at the foot of the hill,
Up on the mountain side,—
Over the brook to the maple-tree,
Where the shepherd dog lies asleep,
I call the wandering flocks to me,
And gather the truant sheep.

THE JOY OF GIVING.

A SOLILOQUY BY ALICE WESTON CONE (AGE 13).

WHY is it when we give
Unto our friends our time, assistance, cash,
We feel so good, so happy, and so glad?
Why is it when we give to other folks
The self-same things, we grudge them e'en the time
That's spent in giving? The answer 's hard,
But after thought and meditation I've decided
The answer is—the folks.

SOME FRIENDLY LETTERS.

WEST CORNWALL, CONN.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: You have always come to us as far back as I can remember and I enjoy reading you very much.

I was in the great San Francisco Earthquake and I thought I would try to tell you a little of my experience. I was awakened in the morning by an unearthly noise and the house shaking as a cat shakes a mouse. I jumped up as soon as I could, thinking that the end of the world had surely come. I tried to run downstairs but they were shaking so I could not. When the earthquake ceased we all ran out in the street in our night-clothes where our neighbors were, in the same apparel.

All day long false reports kept coming in from downtown and dense clouds of smoke covered up the sun.

That night we went up on Twin Peaks, where we stayed three nights. The first night the ashes fell all over us. The next two nights we were not bothered by them as we had secured an old shed, in which ten of us slept.

We took five of our chickens with us and tied strings around their legs, the ends of which were tied to a stake. We took these for food as we expected a famine. Most of our blankets, food and other things, we tied on to an old bicycle and a coaster. Each one of us girls had one blanket pinned around us and some of us had more. At the last moment my sister rushed into the house and brought out two tin cups tied around her neck.

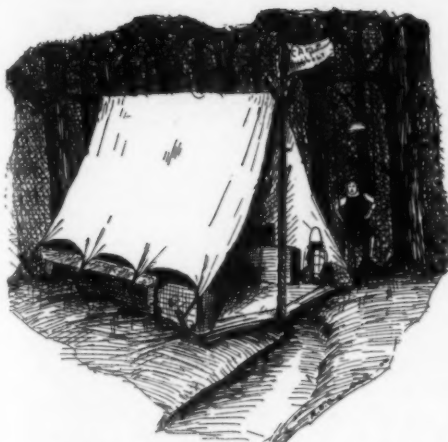
On the hill we met a Frenchwoman who had walked about three miles wheeling a baby buggy filled with clothes. The only food she had was a few scraps tied up in her dress-skirt. She could not speak any English which made it all the harder for her. She would look at the fire, clasp her hands and say, "Ter-ri-ble! Ter-ri-ble! La! La! La! La! La! Oo! Oo!" As we look back upon it now it seems very funny.

One of my friends put on her three best dresses, one over another, as she expected her house to burn. The wild birds sang all night long on the hills because it was so light. We also took our dog and two canary birds with us. Saturday we went home as our house did not burn, the fire stopping four blocks away.

My mother who was visiting in Connecticut at the time sent for us, but we all hope to be back some day as we think there is no place like San Francisco, even if we do get shaken up sometimes.

Your devoted reader,

CAROLINE E. GIBSON (age 13).



"THE CAMP." BY ROLAND W. CRANDALL, AGE 13.

LAWRENCEBURG, IND.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have never written to you before, though I have belonged to the League for two years now. My aunt has given you to my brother ever since he was a little boy, and as he will be twenty-two in November, we have had you quite a long time. I have been sending my little verses to the League pretty regularly ever since you published one of them. I was only ten then, but I am twelve now. I am interested in all the members, but especially in the English ones. I think if I were not an American I should love England better than any other country. I have never ceased to pity those members of the League who live in a city. I have such fine times out here in the country. I have five sisters and one brother, two of my sisters and my brother belong to the League.

I live up on a big hill, one of those that surround the Ohio Valley. From one window in our house one can see three States. My brother and a friend of his, assisted by my father, built a house high up in a big tree, and they used to camp out in it for weeks at a time, for it was big enough to eat and sleep in, and it had a good-sized porch. I remain your devoted reader,

ELIZABETH PAGE JAMES.

CORTLAND, NEW YORK.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I just had such a lovely trip from my home in Central Michigan to my grandmother's in Central New York. My mother, my little sister and I went by rail to Detroit, and then took a large boat, "The Eastern States," across Lake Erie to Buffalo. It was a perfectly beautiful night and the lake was as smooth as a sea of glass.

Near Rochester on the New York Central my little sister lost her hat out of the car window. Mother had to stop in Syracuse to buy a new one.

I enjoy the stories "From Sioux to Susan," and "The Life of Abraham Lincoln" very much.

Your faithful reader,

MARGARET A. EWING (age 10).

CHAPTERS.

If all League members knew how much fun chapters have, and how much they are benefited by their meeting, every member would be a chapter member. Chapters meet and read the League

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contributions and other interesting things aloud, play games, get up entertainments, and work together in many ways. Some of them have small dues and sets of rules and regular meeting-places. Others meet at members' houses in rotation, and enjoy themselves in any way that pleases them for the time. To read and discuss the League contributions is one of the most profitable features. New chapters forming may have their badges, etc., come in one large envelope, postage free.

NEW CHAPTERS.

No. 909. Frank N. Snell, President; Arthur E. Hoppin, Secretary; seven members. Address, 615 Summit Ave., Milwaukee, Wis.

No. 910. "The Almond Blossom." Agnes Wilson, President; Aimée Vanneman, Secretary; five members. Address, American Mission, Tabriz, Persia.

No. 911. "Columbia Chapter." Florence M. Field, Secretary; sixty members. Address, Public School No. 170, 130 E. 110th St., N. Y. City.

No. 912. "Narcissus." Elizabeth Eckel, President; Katherine Davis, Secretary; five members. Address, 123 No. 15th St., St. Joseph, Mo.

No. 913. "Vulcan Club." Clement R. Wood, President; Sterling A. Wood, Secretary; five members. Address, 1233 So. 20th St., Birmingham, Alabama.

No. 914. "New Bedford Chapter." Bessie Lee, Secretary; twelve members. Address, 158 Summer St., New Bedford, Mass.

No. 915. "Idora Chapter." Clarisse Mansfield, President; Lloyd O'Connell, Vice-President; Charles E. Mansfield, Secretary; ten members. Address, 541 Baker St., San Francisco, Cal.

No. 916. "Jolly Half-dozens." Marjorie Peeples, President; Clara Wright, Secretary; six members. (Address wanted.)

No. 917. "I. T." Janet Miller, President; Margaret Howard, Secretary; five members. Address, 326 W. 5th St., Dayton, Ohio.

No. 918. "The August Club." Elizabeth Field, President; Marjorie Teall, Secretary. Address, Little Red House, Stockbridge, Mass.

No. 919. "Little Women." Sepha Pischel, President; Inez Pischel, Secretary; five members. Address, Ross Valley, Marin Co., Cal.

AN APPRECIATIVE LETTER.

GLENDEVON, DEVONSHIRE PLACE, EASTBOURNE, ENGLAND.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I do not know how to thank you for your kindness in awarding me a cash prize for my verses on "Bygone Days."

Not only has it given great pleasure to my friends, but it has encouraged me so much, and has made me hope that, with patience and courage, I may some day succeed in the world as I have succeeded in ST. NICHOLAS.

Then I have received so many kind letters from League members, and I have found so many unknown friends over the sea, that I feel I must thank you for that, too.



"THE CAMP." BY FLORA SHEEN, AGE 11.

I am sure that to belong to the "St. N. L." and to study the work of others there, is the best training a would-be-author can have.

For your kind encouragement, for the two lovely prizes, and for the great goodness every one has shown me I thank you many times. Believe me, with best wishes, yours most gratefully,

MARGARET STUART BROWNE.



"A HEADING FOR DECEMBER." BY WILLIAM W. WESTRING, AGE 16.

THE ROLL OF HONOR.

No. 1. A list of those whose contributions would have been used had space permitted.

No. 2. A list of those whose work entitles them to encouragement.

VERSE 1.

Maud Dudley
Shackleford
Ethel B. Youngs
Louisa F. Spear
Nannie Clark Barr
Stella Benson
Grace J. Conner
Aileen Hyland
Katherine Edwards
Gordon
Lillie G. Menary
E. Babette Deutsch

VERSE 2.

Augusta Chinnock
Martha G. Schreyer
Cora Bloomfield
McElroy
Elizabeth M. Sander
Helen Janet Smith
Margaret Elizabeth
Allen
Adolph Newmann
Twila A. McDowell
William Nestor
Cecilia Rehfeld
Mary Elizabeth Mair
Joseph P. D. Hull
Florence Amelia
Kenaston
Lea Gazzam
Ruth Stone
Eather Hopkins
Buford Brice
Gladys C. Edgerly
Doris F. Halman
Adelaide Nichols
Margaret Barrette
Frances Hyland
Marian Chace
Marian Sanford
Drum

PROSE 1.

Ruth A. Spalding
Helen Leslie
Follan-see
Irene Bowen
Freda M. Harrison
Eleanor McCandless
Jeannette Munro
Madeline F. H.
Avietiene
Jessie Freeman Foster
Garnet Emma Trott
Elizabeth Black
Mary Pemberton
Nourse
Catharine H. Straker
Pauline Hopkins

PROSE 2.

Claire Taylor
May Richardson
Arthur Kramer
Marjorie Crabbe
Virginia Archibold
Eleanor Mason
Knowles Entrikin
George Switzer
Samuel Bunting
Culver
Mildred Nason
Margaret B. Quick
James Harvey
Joyce Clark
Rebecca Edith Hillis
A. H. Redfield
Mervin Louis
Lichtenstein
Matty G. H. Mitchell
Catherine Pew
Beatrice B. Hood
Elizabeth C. Peck
Janet McCurdy Scott
Elliott C. Bergen
Marion Risedorph
Bruce T. Simonds
Margaret H. Coover
Margaret Cobb
Dora Rabinovitz

DRAWING 1.

Gerald Kaufman
Lucy Pedder
Emily W. Browne
Alwyn C. B. Nicolson
Brownie Matthews
A. Reynolds Ekel
Muriel E. Halstead
W. R. Lohse
Alice Shirley Willis
Alice Humphrey
Vera Marie Demens
Helen L. Stockin
Bessie B. Styron
Dorothy Ochtman
Jennie Fairman
Helen F. Price
Mary Klauder
Alberta A. Heinmuller
Esther Brown

DRAWING 2.

Margaret Dobson
Gladys M. Gaw
Marjorie R. Peck
Elizabeth Schwarz
William H. Shanahan
Everard A. McAvoy
Beth May
Raymond Rohn
Edna Crane

Grace F. Slack
Max Rolnik
Ida Neve
Charlotte Waugh
Helen Mortanoff
Ruth Cutler
Dorothea Barrows
Sybil Emerson
Henrietta Havens
Lucia Ellen Halstead
Katharine L.
Carrington
Dorothy E. Robinson
Marianna Gray
E. Buckner Kirk
Sillburn Purvis
Catherine Snell
Eugene L. Walter
Bernice Lungar
Harold F. Weston
Charles W. Horr
Janet L. Shontz
Rachel Wyse
Ida F. Parfitt
Sarah L. Tracy
Virginia Davis
Ruth Conkey
Frances H. Burt
Hazel Halstead
George C. Paparian
Perley D. Baker
Helen E. Emerson
Paul Roman Eager
Dorothy Waugh
Priscilla A. Williams
Mildred Allen

PHOTOGRAPHS 1.

Madison P. Dyer
Collier W. Baird
Leon Schofield
Louise S. Hooker
Eugene L. Dunn
T. H. McKittrick, Jr.
Clifford H. Pangborn
Beatrice Hawksett
Gertrude L. Amory
Dulcie Lawrence
Smith
F. Philippi
Clarence Gamble
Elsie S. Church
Rose Peabody
Helen Whittall
Leonie Harte van
Tecklenburg
Josephine M.
Holloway
Elsie Wormser

PHOTOGRAPHS 2.

Charles Crutchett
Eleanor Van Dyke

Adele S. Burleson
Margaret Stevens
Crucknell
Lucy Kyle Burleson
John F. Hanscom
Minki Hohenlohe
Eleanor T. Baker
Adelia Johnson
Julia Wright
Hortense Byrlawski
Mary Parker
Elizabeth Curtis
Marion Butler
Reginald C. Foster
Elizabeth Andrews
Morris Duncan
Douglas
Katharine Steele
William K. Braasch
Archibald Campbell
Alice L. Cousens

H. Ernest Bell
Mary M. P. Shipley
Sam M. Dillard
Loraine Powers
Minnie E.
Schwarzwaelder
William Bruce Carlson
Luke Sells Stiles
Maise C. Morris
Mary W. Kehler
Susan J. Appleton
Robert Storer
Ellen Hickson
Elizabeth Sanford
Warner
John E. Burkt
Beatrice Verral
Julius Golder
Lois Donovan
Arthur T. Brice
Elinor L. P. Lyon

Jessie Delia E. Arnstein
Atwood Grace S. Ewing
Doris Rebecca LeSane Tait
Long Charles Dodge Hoag
Josiah George B. Thorpe
Bridge Mary Singleton

Helen Henderson
Nellie PUZZLES 1.

Shane J. Cuthbert Long
Alan F. Mary Angood
Berhoff End Hatley
Margaret Theobald Forstall
MacLaren Florence Lowenhaupt
Gladys E. Charles H. Hotchkiss
Chamberlain Dorothy Eddy
Helen Stella E. Jacobs
Peabody Bessie Garrison
Margaret A. Dole
Geraldine Hester Gunning
Cabot Frances Whitney
Louise Hollberg
Dorothy Fox
Frank Wilkinson
Edith Younghem
Katherine E. Spear
George J. Mackley
Louise Hoag
Clinton H. Carlton
Cornelia M. Hallam

PUZZLES 2.

Alice R. Bragg
Charlotte E. Benedict
Helen A. Ross
Eunice B. Stebbins
Charley Stanton
Ruth Weeks
Leopold Wellberg
Thomas McGee
Burton C. Stimson

LEAGUE NOTES AND LETTERS.

BETTER ADDRESSES WANTED.

NAMES of applicants for membership who failed to give correct addresses:

John Austin, Maxwell Church, Helena Weill, Dorothy De Long, Elinor Merrell, Dorothy Mallette, Cienam T. Miller, Henry W. Andrews, Nancy Smith, W. A. Tomes, Jr., Arthur Dixon.

Gold badge winners whose badges have been returned by the P. O.: John I. Pearce, 3rd, Edwin G. Cram.

It is very necessary for contributors to write their names and addresses plainly, as well as to give their age. A certain little girl missed getting a silver badge this month because she failed to put her address on her drawing.

HAMPSTEAD, LONDON, ENGLAND.

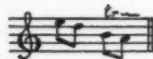
DEAR EDITOR: It is not yet an hour since I received ST. NICHOLAS and found that I am going to receive a "Gold Badge." Oh, dear Editor, I thank you so much, not only for printing the picture and for the gold badge, but for the great encouragement you have given me. I am sure that through your League I have learnt a better lesson than I have learnt from all my masters.

Yours very sincerely,

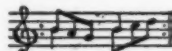
ALWYN C. B. NICOLSON.
(Silver Medal, Gold Medal through dear ST. NICHOLAS.)

NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: As I sit on the porch I notice a robin at the foot of yonder pine-tree. Hark!



I imagine that he is singing to his "lady-love," who, as I notice, is in this pine-tree. An answer comes:



A cricket or so is singing in yonder willow-tree and so passing his summer away; but the ants, in the gravel path, are busily employed storing up food for the winter, and I often marvel at the fact that these wonderful little insects can carry particles larger than themselves and more than likely a great deal heavier than they are.

In yonder meadow a horse and a cow are grazing. Can you not see the butterfly? It flutters! Alas! it disappears.

See the crow upon yonder chestnut! The butterfly reappears. My attention is attracted to a locust and I wonder why—

"Cock-a-doodle-oo—" cries a rooster, entirely interrupting me.

"Cock-a-doodle-oo—" comes the reply.

"Coo-coo—" cries the coo-coo-clock, so I have to go to the station for the 3.23 train from New York.

These are the joys which nature affords in the country.

Your fond reader,

MERVIN LICHTENSTEIN.

AN OLD MEMBER'S GOOD-BY.

SAWKILL, PENN.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: It is with sincere regret that I am now writing you my last letter—a farewell to the League. I have shared with it my joys and sorrows—my defeats and my successes, and believe me when I say that each have strengthened and made better the mental equipment with which I shall fight the battle of Life. I have known no disappointment more severe than a failure to receive "honorable mention" and no greater success, it still seems, than my gold badge and cash prize.

Though from other magazines I have received other cash prizes, there is not the careful working, month by month, slowly gaining until the goal is reached, as in the League. I have found the League to be a great school, whose diploma of graduation to each student is his or her cultivated mental powers, now ready to attain "still greater and higher achievements." Let us hope that when they come, for come they will, we will meet them with the same resolution and good will that in "bygone" days we gave to the League and its Editors.

Wishing you every prosperity and success that you can possibly have, I remain,

Faithfully your friend,

MAUEL C. STARK (18).

(Honor Member.)

ANOTHER GOOD-BY.

PHILADELPHIA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: To-night for the last time I have sent a contribution to the League—and it must not go without a last word of heartfelt thanks and real sorrow. I do not feel any older now than I did yesterday, to be sure, but I have by force of circumstance crossed the Rubicon: now I must continue the expedition into Italy. I am glad that I have won my spurs in Spain, at any rate—and above all I thank you, I thank you over and over again for the five years of striving and seemingly hopeless work, no more and no less than for my final victory.

Good-by, dear, dear League. For the last time I sign myself,

Your devoted member,

MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD.

OCAMPO, CHIHUAHUA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We are a hundred miles from the railroad and the mail comes in three times a week, on mules and burros.

Ocampo is a sort of a pocket in the Sierra Madre Mountains, about seven thousand feet above sea level, and up to the present time many of the people here have never seen a wagon, but there is a road being built in, and we can see the men working, and it is three thousand feet above us.

I have a typewriter that father gave me.

Yours truly,

FRANCIS F. HILL, JR.

DAVENPORT, IOWA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We have taken you off and on for twenty-six years, and I expect we will take you for twenty-six more:

"It gladdens dark days and adds to the luster of bright ones." Though you probably don't know me very well, I know you, and so do most children in my neighborhood. The finest thing you have done is to imbue Young America with a love of nature. I devote most of my spare time to bird study, and consequently enjoy your magazine very much.

I remain your loving friend,

HARRY VOLLMER.

Other welcome letters have been received from Beatrice B. Hood, Gladys Bowen, Gertrude L. Amory, Alice Palmer, Gertrude F. Hussey, Ellen Low Mills,

Edwin O'Dougherty, Esther Hopkins, Theobald Forstall, Catharine Emma Jackson, James P. Cohen, Jr., Floyd Clarkson, Marguerite Weed, Madeline F. H. Avietine, Gertrude Peiri, Margaret Henry Gill, Helen L. Follansbee, Henry M. Davenport, Frances C. Rosenthal, Mary Powell, Mabelle Meyer, Ruth Avery Benjamin.

PRIZE COMPETITION No. 86.

THE St. Nicholas League awards gold and silver badges each month for the best original poems, stories, drawings, photographs, puzzles, and puzzle answers. Also cash prizes of five dollars each to gold-badge winners who shall again win first place. "Wild Animal and Bird Photograph" prize-winners winning the cash prize will not receive a second badge.

Competition No. 86 will close December 20 (for foreign members December 25). The awards will be announced and prize contributions published in St. NICHOLAS for April.

Verse. To contain not more than twenty-four lines. Title, "The Heart of Youth."

Prose. Story or article of not more than four hundred words. Subject, "My Favorite Poem, and Why." Must be true.

Photograph. Any size, interior or exterior, mounted or unmounted; no blue prints or negatives. Subject, "Children."

Drawing. India ink, very black writing-ink, or wash (not color). Two subjects, "A Child Study" (from life), and an April Heading or Tailpiece for the League, Books and Reading, or any St. NICHOLAS department.

Puzzle. Any sort, but must be accompanied by the answer in full, and must be indorsed.

Puzzle Answers. Best, neatest, and most complete set of answers to puzzles in this issue of St. NICHOLAS. Must be indorsed.

Wild Animal or Bird Photograph. To encourage the pursuing of game with a camera instead of a gun. For the best photograph of a wild animal or bird taken in its natural home: *First Prize*, five dollars and League gold badge. *Second Prize*, three dollars and League gold badge. *Third Prize*, League gold badge.

RULES.

ANY reader of St. NICHOLAS, whether a subscriber or not, is entitled to League membership, and a League badge and leaflet, which will be sent free.

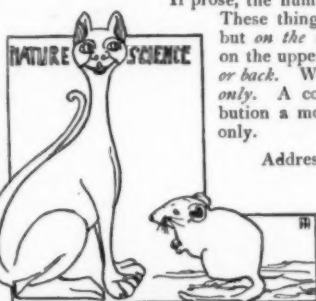
Every contribution, of whatever kind, must bear the name, age, and address of the sender, and be indorsed as "original" by parent, teacher, or guardian, who must be convinced beyond doubt that the contribution is not copied but wholly the work and idea of the sender. If prose, the number of words should also be added.

These things must not be on a separate sheet, but on the contribution itself—if a manuscript, on the upper margin; if a picture, on the margin or back. Write or draw on one side of the paper only. A contributor may send but one contribution a month—not one of each kind, but one only.

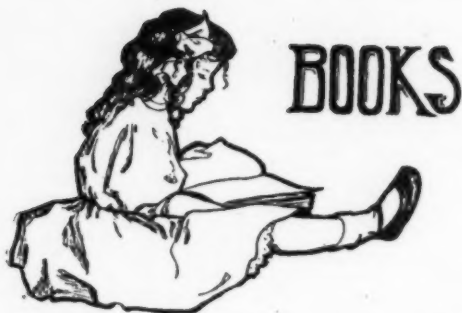
Address: The St. Nicholas League,
Union Square, New York.

NOTICE.

Lost or damaged League badges will be replaced free of charge upon application: This does not apply to silver and gold prize badges. These cannot be replaced.



"DEPARTMENT HEADING." BY HILDE VON THIELMANN, AGE 14.



BOOKS

AND

READING.

HEADING DRAWN BY FANNY BARNHART, AGE 17, HONOR MEMBER ST. NICHOLAS LEAGUE.

The Mistletoe

Who knows the old Irish name for Christmas? It is said to be "Nuadhvllig," the meaning of which is "new all-heal"—a name that arose when the mistletoe was thought to heal all ills and when it was customary to gather it anew at Christmas. We already have Noel, Yule-tide, and Christmas, and here is a new word, if some Celtic scholar will kindly pronounce it for us. Mistletoe should be gathered, for it hurts the oak-trees if not taken off.

Coleridge on Christmas

In the days of the poet Coleridge, the celebration of the Christmas season, as we know it, was not so common in England, for he wrote from a German town describing how they have the custom of making each other presents, and saying: "What the present is, is cautiously kept secret, and the girls have a world of contrivances to conceal it." He then tells of the "yew-bough," or Christmas tree, which then was prepared by the children for their parents—an idea that would probably not be so popular with our children to-day as the custom they and their parents are used to.

Who is "Pelsnichol"?

You may have to study your German books a little to find out an old friend under the title disguise of this odd name. But we don't mind giving you the hint that the odd word means in English "Fur Nicholas." Surely with that suggestion readers of ST. NICHOLAS will quickly recognize a kindly old soul whose visits are welcomed everywhere.

A Good Book on American History

"AMERICAN HERO STORIES" by Eva March Tappan (Harpers') is a little book robed in Quaker gray, and ornamented by a Continental Trumpeter in blue and buff, as well as

bearing the Liberty Bell on its back. It tells the stories of the great men who have made America what it is to-day—beginning with old Christopher Columbus and ending with Abraham Lincoln. It will help to make the study of American History as interesting as it ought to be, and is written in simple style, so as to be understood by small children. The book is brought out by Houghton Mifflin & Co. this season.

The Meaning of "Yule-tide"

We have spoken of the word "Yule." Perhaps you do not all know its origin. If any of you do know, please write out the explanation as soon as possible, for the wise men who make dictionaries are all at sea about this old word that comes from ages before King Alfred let those cakes burn. Look in the dictionary, and you will see how very little is known about this old, old word in spite of the fact that it has never ceased to be used to name the Christmas season. The guess is that it comes from an old Scandinavian word meaning to "yell" and cry aloud with joy, which may be quoted if you are accused of making too much noise at "Yule tide" or "Yell time"; but, somehow, this derivation does not seem at all likely.

Names of the "Three Wise Men"

How many small children have sung the words, "We three Kings of Orient are," with the idea that the writer of this paragraph used to have—namely that the words ran, "We three Kings of Orienta"—and wondered where "Orienta" was situated? The tradition commonly received says their names were Melchior, Balthazar, and Jasper; but other traditions give them as Apellius, Amerus, and Damascus; as Magalath, Galgalath, and Sarasin; and as Ator, Sator, and Peratoras.

It would be hard to explain how there came to be so many variations; but "Sarasin" looks like Saracen, and "Damascus" suggests the city, so some descriptive words may have been taken for names. What more beautiful story is there than the coming of the Magi! It is not surprising that artists have loved to paint the scene, and poets to write about it.

"Occasional" Verse

OF course you all know that occasional used as in the title does not mean "now and then," but verse meant for a special occasion—as a birthday or coronation ode, or a song about a victory. Occasional verse is often very good, and becomes permanent—as some of Oliver Wendell Holmes's verses about his old college classmates and their meetings, or Kipling's "Recessional." If there be among you any amateur poets, they can add greatly to the joy of Christmas morning by writing little couplets or quatrains about the presents. Do not write more than three or four lines, and let them be kindly and pleasant, with a touch of Christmas merriment, little jingles, in fact.

Suppose your little sister Mary is to have a toy dromedary, for example, and you write:

"This is a one-humped dromedary
For our much beloved Mary.
If it had been a two-humped camel
For a rhyme my verse 't would trammel."

That is "occasional verse"—even though not worthy of immortality!

Three New Books

THERE have been sent to this department by the publishers three new books for young people. One is "Merrylips," by Beulah Marie Dix (Macmillan), the story of a young girl's adventures in the days of the Roundheads and Cavaliers. It is a book meant for older young readers, rather exciting in its incidents, being a war story. A young critic says she "likes the heroine, but that she is a very unlikely," but the same young critic kept busily at it until she knew how the story ended.

Another is for younger children—"A Borrowed Sister," by Eliza Orne White, with pictures by Katherine Pyle. It is just the thing to read aloud to an audience of ten-year-olds who like a quiet home story.

The third is "The Railway Children." The same young critic says of this, "A rather pretty story of three funny children, exciting and keeps you laughing. Makes you want to finish it quickly. Bright and harmless, fit for

children of nine, ten, eleven, and along there." The author is E. Nesbit, well known for her fanciful stories, and the publishers are the Macmillans.

A Present for a Little Gardener

IT is every day becoming more important to group your books according to their subjects. So many are now written addressed to readers with special tastes that you may have a sort of little "special" library of your own upon subjects that interest you—whether it be photography, literature, games, history, or gardening. In the latter section, especially, there are plenty of books that tell not only of gardening, but of the poetry and literature that makes work in a garden something more than blind grubbing and guessing at results. Of such "The Garden, You and I" published by Macmillan is a worthy example. It will be well to read it in winter, so as to begin to apply its advice early in the spring. For a youthful gardener it will make a welcome Christmas present.

Learning to Write

A REASON for reading not often given is that it teaches one to write. Dr. Henry van Dyke said recently, "In my opinion, the best way to learn to write good English is to read good English. Books of grammar and rhetoric are of comparatively little value." This, from the author of dozens of books, and Professor of English Literature at Princeton University. Writing may be a gift, but it is a gift given most frequently to those who have loved good books enough to read them often.

A Little "Paradox"

THOUGH you had read all your life about the ocean, you would know it better after a day on the shore than from all your reading. Though you had lived all your life at the sea's edge, you might learn more of its grandeur from a noble poem than your unaided soul had known. These statements together form what is called a paradox; but the moral of it is, neither life nor reading is at its best without the other's interpretation.

The Right Place for a Good Book

THE very best place for a thoroughly good book is in your head and your heart. If it is not worthy of being kept there, it is of little importance where it is kept, or how soon you get rid of it.

The Letter-Box

EAGLE GROVE, IOWA.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: My father, mother and I toured the western states one winter not long ago. When we were visiting in San Diego, Cal., we had a day's trip to Old Mexico, and I want to tell you about it.

We took an early morning start for Tia Juana in the northern part of Old Mexico. We went part way by street car, then for two hours and a half on the narrow gauge R. R., and then were transferred by stage one mile and a half over to the little town of Tia Juana. This was indeed a forsaken-looking place. We could see but little of interest, the cacti, dirty-looking Indians, greasewood, and sand seemed about all.

In the town there were but a few houses, a little church and two curio stores. We went into one of these curio stores and had our handkerchiefs stamped with the Mexican stamp. We also bought a few curios.

Dividing the two countries, U. S. from Mexico, stands a large marble monument.

What interested me the most, was a funny-looking Mexican, one hundred and four years old. This old man could talk very little English but managed to say that he was one hundred and four years old, that he had never worn shoes and that he had never been out of Tia Juana. We gave him a nickel to let us take his picture, when we gave him this nickel he thought he was rich. He had a red bandanna handkerchief that he carried his personal belongings in, and every house he went to, he always took this handkerchief.

On our way back to San Diego our train switched off the main road and went up to a place called Sweetwater Dam. We all got out and looked at the dam. There was a summer-house where people were asked to register their names. The reason that it is called Sweetwater is that the Indians could not get any water that was good to drink and they came up and drank of this water, it was free from alkali and good to drink, and that is the way it got the name Sweetwater.

After looking at the dam a while we took the train back to San Diego.

We had our supper and went to bed very tired but after a very pleasant time.

Yours sincerely,

MELBOURNE SMALLPAGE (age 11.)

SOUTH POMONA, CALIFORNIA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Several months ago my father bought a number of roosters, intending to fatten them for eating. As we have no chicken-house they roosted in the orange trees; and one night a coyote caught all but one. After that the solitary rooster slept in the straw-shed with my young greyhound and they became great friends.

All day long they are together. They eat out of the same dish, and often when I look out of the window I see them lying side by side sound asleep. Like some other children they don't always agree. Sometimes the rooster wants to play when "Dandy" would rather sleep, so he runs up and pecks Dandy's toes or hops on to his back.

Then, as "turn about is fair play" Dandy takes the rooster by the neck and turns him round and round, sometimes pulling out a bunch of feathers.

The rooster is so conceited and struts around in such a funny way that we named him the Governor. He is

quite tame, and we often pick him up and take him around the garden with us. Sometimes when he finds a bit of food he calls, as if to a hen, and Dandy comes bounding from wherever he may be, and the rooster gives up the choice morsel to the dog. They are both vegetarians, living entirely upon milk, bread and vegetables.

We have taken you for several years, and I have your first twelve years, bound.

With good wishes for your prosperity in the future,
I remain your loving reader,

GERTRUDE PALMER.

FORT MONROE, VA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Perhaps some of your readers would like to know how I amused myself last summer when the whole post was quarantined on account of yellow fever. We had a pair of guinea pigs and a lot of baby ones. Myself and my sister (who was 13 years old and I was 8) took turns getting clover for them and they were so tame they would eat out of our hands. Then we rented a pianola and we had our favorite pieces to play, and Baker the market-man went to the library and got a book apiece for us to read that day. We had a goat and he was great fun for I used to ride in a little cart. There was a big ball for the soldiers and mamma and papa led the grand march. I was half glad to come here for it was rather stupid doing the same thing every day although we did have new books to read. I hope you will have room for this, for I never wrote to the letter box before.

Your loving reader,

MERRY ALDEN BAILEY.

P. S. I enjoy you very much. M. A. B.

BALA, PA.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: This is the first time I have ever written a letter to you and I hope you will put it in the Letter-Box. I love to read your stories and I especially like "From Sioux to Susan" and "Pinkey Perkins." I am going to try very hard to earn a badge.

I live in a beautiful country place a few miles out of Philadelphia, and I have many friends. We have bicycles and ride them to school. I would like very much to have the receipt of fudge, and I thought one of the League members might be able to tell me through the Letter-Box. With best wishes, I remain,

Your interested reader,

SIBYL H. WRIGHT (age 11).

BRIDGEPORT, OHIO.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We have taken you for 14 years and we think a lot of you. I enjoy reading about the league. I have been reading "Pinkey Perkins" and I named my pet rat after him, I am going to send a picture with my next letter. We have 20 little chickens and 2 ducks. We have a nice big shepherd dog, his name is Bob, and we have two cats.

Well that is all I have to say.

I am your faithful reader,

AGNES MCGOUGH (age 9).



ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE NOVEMBER NUMBER

NOVEL ACROSTIC. Primals, Hampton Roads; third row, United States. 1. Haunt. 2. Annul. 3. Maize. 4. Peter. 5. Their. 6. Olden. 7. Nasal. 8. Retry. 9. Oaage. 10. Antic. 11. Deeds. 12. Sasin.

CHARADE. Whip-poor-will.

DOUBLE BEHEADINGS AND CURTAILINGS. Roger Sherman. 1. Pa-rap-et. 2. Un-own-ed. 3. Le-gum-es. 4. El-cva-ti. 5. Er-rat-ic. 6. Re-sid-es. 7. Un-hap-py. 8. Pe-cra-ge. 9. Ca-ran-el. 10. Un-man-ly. 11. Fr-ant-ic. 12. Ma-nag-es.

NOVEL ACROSTIC. Initials, Silas Marner; 1 to 11, Middlemarch; zigzag, George Eliot. 1. Sagamore. 2. Idleness. 3. Laodices. 4. American. 5. Signaled. 6. Movement. 7. Aversion. 8. Rallery. 9. Nuisance. 10. Exhorter. 11. Rotation.

ANAGRAMS. Crates, traces, recast, carest, racest, caters, carets, caster, re-cast, reacts.

DOUBLE BEHEADINGS. Pocahontas. 1. As-pen. 2. Fl-our. 3. Oc-cur. 4. St-ale. 5. As-hen. 6. So-out. 7. Ja-net. 8. Of-ten. 9. St-and. 10. Re-sia.

TO OUR PUZZLERS: Answers to be acknowledged in the magazine, must be received not later than the 15th of each month, and should be addressed to ST. NICHOLAS Riddle-box, care of THE CENTURY CO., 33 East Seventeenth St., New York City.

ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES IN THE SEPTEMBER NUMBER were received, before September 5th, from Lowry A. Biggers—Elsie Nathan—Eleanor Houston Hill—Harriet Bingham—Ruth E. Abel—Mary E. Dunbar—James A. Lynd—Kathryn I. Wellman—Florence G. Mackey—Doris Long.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE SEPTEMBER NUMBER were received, before September 15th, from E. H. Falck, 1—C. Richmond, 1—E. Hamlin, 2—M. H. Batchelder, 1—C. K. Rogers, 1—E. Braley, 1—M. J. Averbeck, Jr., 1—Margaret M. Jones, 5—L. Bixby, 1—Edmund P. Shaw, 5—E. Bolter, 1—E. K. Stagers, 1—H. L. Schreuder, 1—C. R. Doherty, 2—R. W. Bowen, 1—R. Kassler, 1—Barbara Brown, 1—B. Zucker, 1—B. Touster, 1—D. M. Holden, 1—Flora Horr, 9—M. W. Eckart, 1—A. S. Macdonald, 1—Carl Gutzeit, 2—S. Vought, 1—G. Curtes, 1—R. and D. Weeks, 2—S. C. Lyman, 1—M. Young, 1—Edna Meyle, 5—R. Sichel, 1—F. E. Wonham, 1—S. Holt, 1—Eather E. Evans, 6—A. H. Schwerin, 1—M. V. Ward, 1—M. Walker, 1—L. F. Lyons, 1—H. Patton, 1—Myrtle Alderson, 11—Muriel von Tunselmann, 6—“Queenscourt,” 6—“St. Gabriel’s Chapter,” 7—Carolyn E. Hutton, 6—Elise F. Stern, 2—J. Brown, 1—B. E. Warren, 1—Mabel Strachan, 2—E. B. Stebbins, 1.

A CIRCLE PUZZLE.

(Gold Badge, St. Nicholas League Competition.)



By beginning at the right letter, and then taking every third letter, some familiar words may be spelled.

Designed by

THOMAS DE WIND.

DOUBLE ZIGZAG.

1 . . . 3
* . . *
* . . *
* . . *
* . . *
* . . *
* . . *
* . . *
* . . *
* . . *
2 . . . 4

CROSS WORDS: 1. A masculine name. 2. To go on shipboard. 3. Dogmas. 4. Somewhat. 5. An as-

sembly-room in a dwelling of the Pueblo Indians. 6. Cargo. 7. A tropical fruit. 8. At a distance but within view. 9. A small pill. 10. Lament.

From 1 to 2 and from 3 to 4 each name a well known book by a famous American author.

JOHN FARR SIMONS (Honor Member).

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

(Silver Badge, St. Nicholas League Competition.)

My first is in cherry but not in prune;
My second, in dish but not in spoon;
My third is in rain but not in snow;
My fourth is in friend, but not in foe;
My fifth is in stone but not in rock;
My sixth is in stocking, not in sock;
My seventh, in mist, but not in fog;
My eighth is in swamp, but not in bog;
My last is in sparrow, but not in wren;
My whole is a day of joy to men.

ALBERTINA L. PITKIN.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA

I AM composed of thirty-seven letters and form a quotation from Shakespeare.

My 12-26-21-34 is to-regard with care. My 1-6-30-8-24 is to utter a sudden and loud outcry. My 10-19-3-29-9 is to sink into a fainting fit. My 37-18-32-2-36 is first in excellence. My 16-25-23-14-33 are sinews. My 27-7-4-31-13-28 is one who transacts business for another. My 5-20-35-15-11-17-22 is an edifice in which dramatic performances are exhibited.

V. D.



ILLUSTRATED NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

THIS differs from the ordinary numerical enigma in that the words forming it are pictured instead of described. When the nine objects have been rightly guessed, and the letters set down in the order given, the forty-two letters will form a quotation from Owen Meredith.

ROYAL ACROSTICS.

(Gold Badge, St. Nicholas League Competition.)



I. READING ACROSS: 1. An army officer. 2. A black wood. 3. A title of respect used in India. 4. Pertaining to the ancient Carthaginians. Centrals, downward, a cruel king of England.

II. 1. A famous poet of antiquity. 2. A pygmy. 3. Merriment. 4. The country of the Nile. Centrals, a queen who was beheaded.

III. 1. A fine game. 2. An ancient empire whose capital was Rhagæ. 3. To overtop other objects. 4. The goddess of the chase. 5. The foundation of an atoll. 6. A great country. Centrals, a son of Alfred the Great.

IV. 1. A kind of quartz. 2. Pertaining to the poles. 3. Proposal. 4. A month. 5. A question. 6. Coarse grass. Centrals, the youngest son of Ethelwulf.

V. 1. A shield. 2. Dismal. 3. To submerge. 4.

A public place in Rome. 5. A rascal. 6. A sleeping vision. Centrals, a Hanoverian king.

VI. 1. A Scotch garment. 2. Mournful music. 3. The capital of Alaska. 4. An anæsthetic. 5. A kind of carriage. 6. A missile weapon. Central, a mythical king of Britain.

VII. 1. An Arabian seaport. 2. Bobwhite. 3. Pertaining to an order of architecture. 4. Course. 5. Barbarians who overran Europe. 6. A female monarch. Centrals, the conqueror of Norway in 1028.

VIII. 1. A diadem. 2. A planet. 3. A part in music. 4. The head of an Arab family. Centrals, a daughter of James II.

IX. 1. A man of great wealth. 2. Sluggish. 3. The nine goddesses. 4. A product of the pine tree. Centrals, the nickname of a famous queen.

MINA SUMMY.

WORD-SQUARES.

I. 1. A story. 2. Old. 3. A metal. 4. A whirlpool.

II. 1. Part of the foot. 2. A river in Spain. 3. A name of Ireland. 4. Protracted.

E. FILLING AND V. DAVIDSON.

TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

CROSS-WORDS (of equal length): 1. To burn slightly. 2. A person having white hair and pink eyes. 3. An Arctic cetacean. 4. A flue. 5. The name of a seaside park in New Jersey.

My initials and the next row following spell a familiar name; my finals, a familiar decoration.

DOROTHY EDDY (Honor Member).

DOUBLE DIAGONALS.

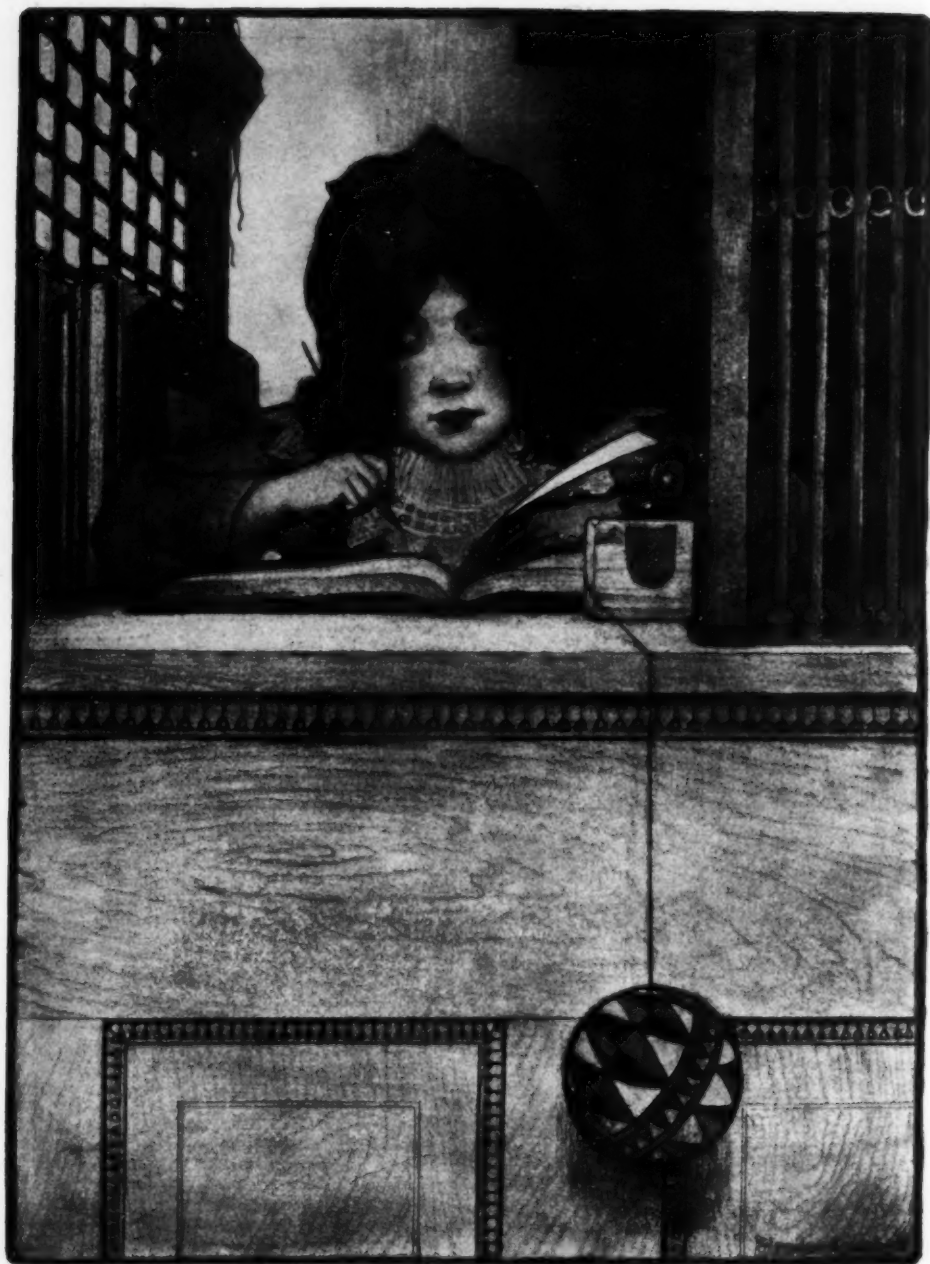
(Silver Badge, St. Nicholas League Competition.)



CROSS-WORDS: 1. To wander. 2. To empty. 3. Boastful behavior. 4. To give notice. 5. Distinguished. 6. Eternal. 7. Brave.

From 1 to 3, expensive; from 3 to 5, quiet; from 1 to 5, most precious; from 2 to 3, a distinguished person; from 3 to 4, a circle; from 2 to 4, looking fixedly.

CLARINA HANKS.



Drawn for ST. NICHOLAS by Elendon Campbell.

ON NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

"PAPA'S NEW 'DIARY' HAS A PAGE FOR EACH DAY IN THE YEAR—
BUT MY BIRTHDAY 'S SUCH A LONG WAY OFF! IT COMES W-A-Y O-V-E-R H-E-R-E!"